

AUDITIONS

CASTING CALLS

CASTING CALLS

For an action movie travel for location filming, call Sarberg Productions. 111-1111 9-7pm weeknights/11-1pm-Sat.

AUDITIONS To be held Dec 30-Jan 7 for movies, commercials, soaps & music videos. No experience necessary. All ages. For information call (403) 111-1111

Producer of Shows for the world's largest cruise lines, is casting several companies of attractive singers, dancers and acrobats for openings beginning in April. We are casting companies of 30 for full scale productions of 42ND STREET, A CHORUS LINE, a full scale Las Vegas Revue, and a singer's BROADWAY Revue. (Broadway or National Tour credits for 42ND STREET and A CHORUS LINE preferred. Must be excellent tappers for 42ND STREET) We are also casting several companies of 8 with male and female singers for a LAS VEGAS REVUE

Alberta's premier theme parks are searching for singers, dancers, musicians, variety artists, actors, clowns, and supervisors. You will be a part of the magic. So get together and 'shine' at our auditions.

CASTING TODAY LOOKING FOR NEW FACES ...

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... a "caddillac tour" ... an 11-week EQUITY tour, involving no more than 10 performances per week, with weekly performance being the evening for parents. Dates (including rehearsal) are from September 3 to April 4 1987. We are looking for ... and an

CASTING CALLS

AUDITIONS Artistic Director of the Hommages Theatre Centre will be holding general auditions in Toronto on June 10 and 12, 1987 and in Vancouver on June 19 and 20, 1987. Resumes should be sent to the address below and must be accompanied by a personal letter from the artist. Auditionees will be notified of the time and place of the auditions once the selection process has been completed. Please prepare two contrasting pieces for the audition.

A LIVE THEATRE COMPANY

Auditions for the 1987/88 season at LTC and for the Resident Ensemble of Artists. Equity and Equity Apprentice Actors who have not auditioned in the past two years and who wish to obtain an appointment for an audition, should send a resume, photo, and letter describing their career goals and plans. Resumes must be postmarked no later than June 12, 1987. Actors who have obtained an audition time will be notified by mail no later than July 3, 1987. Auditions will take place in Toronto on July 13 and 14; Auditions in Calgary will take place on July 31 and, if numbers warrant, on August 1. Actors are asked to prepare two contrasting pieces and to be prepared to demonstrate any special, favourite skills. Information about the upcoming season will be available at the auditions.

OPEN AUDITIONS Understudies for male Mediterranean types, 7-12 years old, for the musical "AQUA" Tuesday June 2, 3PM, ACT Studios, 1515 Main 3rd Floor

WEST THEATRE will be auditioning Edmonton on May 28th and 29. Would like to see actors, writers, designers and production personnel interested in involvement with a new ensemble theatre artists. We are looking especially for creative actors, with some physical and singing ability. We enjoy working on new plays. We are also looking for writers with both a theatricality and an interest in social-political issues, who are interested in residencies with

A Perspective for Aspiring Actors in Alberta

Revised Second Edition

Alberta
CULTURE AND MULTICULTURALISM

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DEC 13 1988

AUDITIONS

A Perspective for Aspiring Actors
in
Alberta

REVISED SECOND EDITION

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CULTURE AND MULTICULTURALISM

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Revised 1988 January

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Questions or comments regarding AUDITIONS
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ALBERTA CULTURE AND MULTICULTURALISM

Performing Arts

11th Floor, C.N. Tower

10004 - 104 Avenue

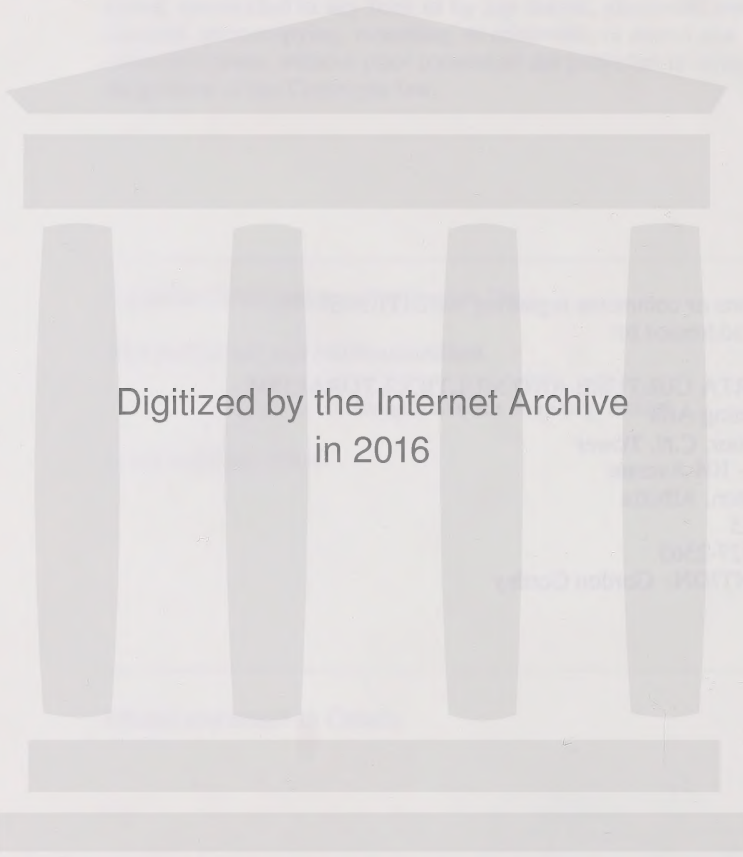
Edmonton, Alberta

T5J 0K5

(403) 427-2563

ATTENTION: Gordon Gordey

PLEASE NOTE: The term “actor” is used in this booklet to denote male and female actors. For easier reading, the pronoun “he” and the possessive “his” apply to all actors, regardless of gender.



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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is intended to assist aspiring young actors maximize potential employment. It is hoped that the reader will benefit from the experiences related by veteran actors, directors and producers; and from the lists of theatres, organization, schools and unions that are essential information sources for survival in the acting profession.

Pursuing an acting career is difficult, and the assimilation of the material contained herein no guarantee of success. Ultimately, each actor must develop his own job search strategy. There is no singular method of success. You will constantly need to reassess and revise your strategy. Circumstances invariably change and the ability to adapt to these changes will be the mark of your staying power.

An audition is to an actor what an interview is to most other people in the job market. It is the means by which you market your talents to a prospective employer. But be forewarned. It is an acquired skill that only improves with practice and experience. There are methods however that will increase your chances of success. For example: research the company by which you hope to be engaged, pick up a copy of the play for which you are auditioning, have your photo and resume ready. Be prepared for anything.

It is advisable to arrive at the audition early to "get into the space." If you are earlier than necessary, it may be advantageous to find a relaxing environment near the theatre, such as a church or an art gallery. It would be best to do your warm-ups at home, as not all theatres have extra rehearsal rooms. Make sure your audition pieces are polished and ready. A director will lose patience with an actor who has obviously spent insufficient time and effort on his monologues. Ask another actor or a respected friend to observe your monologues and offer you feedback. An objective observer can provide you with helpful insights about the strengths and weaknesses of your audition piece.

Once you are in the audition hall try to be relaxed, confident and focused. Contrary to popular opinion, all auditions are not terrify-

ing, demeaning and humiliating experiences run by rude, belligerent tyrants. Normally, you will be met by the show's director and the stage manager, both of whom will strive to make you feel comfortable. However, it is not uncommon to find a musical director, producer, choreographer or designer in attendance. The average audition lasts anywhere from 15 minutes to half an hour.

It's a short amount of time in which to make a lasting impression. As an actor, you know all about objectives or intentions. Make it your intention to convince the auditor(s) that you're the right one for the job. Show yourself off at your best. Lengthy explanations about the text is not appreciated. Leave the props, costumes and any other extraneous aids at home — they only get in the way of the text.

Different directors have different processes when casting. Certainly it is to your advantage to know as much as possible about each director. For example, if you know a particular director produces predominantly new Canadian works it is advisable not to audition with a Shakespearean monologue.

There are many variables a director has to consider before determining his final casting choices. Some directors have thoroughly digested their scripts, have researched extensively and have a clear idea of the kind of actor they want for a particular role. Others rely on "artistic instinct". They will tend to look at such things as an actor's ability to work in an ensemble situation, the balancing of physical traits within the cast, vocal range, age range, versatility, flexibility, special skills, etc.

Unfortunately, due to time and budget constraints, many directors type cast because they can be reasonably assured that a certain actor will be able to deliver the goods in the short rehearsal period available. It may not seem personally fair, or even conducive to good art, but it is the reality of professional theatre. You shouldn't feel that an unsuccessful audition is necessarily a negative reflection on your acting ability.

A director, with his interpretation of the play and the timelines to produce it, is attempting to fit the right actor to the right role. There are more actors than roles to be filled, so the director can afford to be selective.

When you set out on your quest for that all important first job in the theatrical jungle, it may strike you as impenetrable and intimidating. Try not to be daunted. Become familiar with it and make it your home turf. Strive to maintain a high profile. Auditioning and sending out your photo/resume is only half the battle. Try to attend as many play openings as possible. Most theatres have a reception following the first performance, and this is an opportune time to make those all important contacts. Many of your peers will be there and more importantly the artistic director or guest director will be milling about. Standing in the corner feeling isolated and self-conscious will get you nowhere.

Most veteran actors and directors are very approachable and genuinely interested in meeting fresh talent, but they won't approach you if they don't know you. Take the initiative. You've got nothing to lose. Be confident and sociable. Let them know who you are and try to make a good impression, but don't come off as being pushy. If you keep your ear to the ground, chances are you'll discover a thing or two.

Finally, you will find that the establishment of a successful and productive acting career is no mean feat. Don't imagine for a moment that you will find yourself regularly employed as an actor when fresh out of acting school. Most actors work less than six months in the theatre in any given year. You can expect it to take at least two or three years before you find yourself in the enviable position of being a regularly-employed actor. The feast or famine syndrome is no myth. There is no room for complacency in the business, if you want to survive. Talent is not enough. Many gifted artists have fallen by the wayside because they just didn't have the "chutzpah" or the marketing skills. Set your goals and shoot for the moon, but do it with your eyes open and your feet on the ground. Break a leg!

I. AUDITIONING

What Are The Auditors Looking For?

The auditors are the people conducting the audition. This may include any or all of the following:

- Artistic Director (theatre)
- Director and/or Producer (in any medium)
- Playwright
- Casting Director
- Casting Agent and various assistants
- Designer

You've attended your "nth" audition. You've worked diligently trying to impress the auditors. Yet your efforts continue to go unrewarded. "Just what in the name of Beelzebub do they want from me anyway?" you find yourself musing. It's a difficult question to answer. If you ask a dozen different directors you'll probably get a dozen different answers.

Naturally, directors look for good acting and that elusive quality called "talent". They look for brilliance. They look for stage presence, good vocal range, the ability to move well and a professional attitude. Often it comes down to the right look.

The more that you can bring to an audition, the better your chances are at impressing your auditors. The ability to sing can be a definite advantage and dance training can make your stage movements flow more naturally.

The following comments from professionals attest to the wide variety of factors that influence casting decisions.

We asked them: “What do you look for from an actor in an audition?”

“People who are lively and talented, with a wide range of skills, emotions and experiences that they can convey. People who will also work well together in a company situation.” (Gerry Potter, Artistic Director of Workshop West)

“For a very subtle quality. I look for an actor who is natural; who can just be the person I’m looking for.” (Anne Wheeler, Independent Film Director/Producer)

“Personally, I look for an actor with good energy, a willingness to take risks, the ability to be heard and understood, and who exudes confidence.” (John Milton Branton, Artistic Director of Nexus Theatre)

“Confidence. Sometimes people are very good but terribly shy and they almost talk themselves out of a job. They have to learn to have the confidence that they are talented.” (Bob Baker, Freelance Director)

“An actor who can demonstrate spontaneity, imagination, inventiveness, and who has presence will always impress me. However, I place a premium on honesty, vulnerability, and a willingness to explore new ideas. I find it frustrating to work with actors who have a rigid approach or think they have nothing to learn.” (Michael D. James, Freelance Director)

On the other hand some directors expressed doubt as to the effectiveness of auditioning. Jim Guedo, the Artistic Director of Phoenix Theatre, is one such director:

“They (auditions) can only tell you so much about an actor. I tend to favour the interview because there is less pressure to perform. The actor is more relaxed and open, giving me a clearer picture of whether or not I can work with him.”

One director suggested actors remember the business basics of a firm handshake and a straight look in the eyes. Edmonton casting

director, Bette Chadwick, emphasizes the importance of a business-like attitude:

“Some people are very professional and a pleasure to deal with. Presentation is most important. A medium talent with an aggressive-enough manner may present himself in a more dynamic way than a more talented type who is less organized; therefore, he may end up working more.”

John Milton Branton, the Artistic Director of Nexus Theatre agrees with this assessment. He recognizes the audition as a critical step in being cast.

“I expect all actors who come in to audition for me to be professional. To me that means they should arrive on time with all the basic components intact: current photo and resume, and of course, having their pieces memorized. Amazingly I still get actors reading their monologues. Needless to say they are not going to get the job.”

Different Kinds Of Auditions

Auditions vary in nature and in location. There are five commonly used methods of auditioning in the theatre: cold readings, prepared readings, prepared performances, personal interviews and improvisation.

In any audition, be prepared to take direction and don't be thrown off if the director/auditor doesn't want to see your prepared pieces in their entirety. Try to overcome the inevitable nervousness by really listening to directions.

COLD READINGS: When you are asked to read a script that you haven't prepared and may never have seen before, you are being asked to do a “cold reading”. You can ask for a few minutes to look over the script. Cold readings are often used in auditioning for commercials. Prepare for cold readings by working on sight reading. You can improve by practicing on your own or with fellow actors, where both the reading and the critical assessment by your peers is helpful.

PREPARED READINGS: When you are asked to “read” for a specific part in a specific play, you will have time to look at the material carefully before your audition. Often you will know from which section of the play you will be reading. This type of audition is usually the last part of the casting process. You may be “called back” a number of times to read for the same play or to read with different actors. Here, the director has a chance to hear you speaking the words of the play he will be directing. Often his casting decision will be made based on this type of reading. When you have an opportunity to “read for the part”, come prepared. Read the play and familiarize yourself with the sections from which you will most likely be reading.

PREPARED PERFORMANCES: These are pieces that you have chosen and prepared for the audition. You will not always get the chance to perform them the way you practised. For example, you may be stopped at a certain point and asked to improvise, or the auditors may simply cut the piece short and try something else.

PERSONAL INTERVIEWS: Interviews are often used by the director to determine your compatibility with cast or troupe, and to get a general idea of your personality. In film and T.V., the interview alone may be used in casting for small parts.

IMPROVISATIONS: Improvs are used to see how you respond to direction, how imaginative you are on the spot, how you move, etc.

Theatre and film auditions generally last about 20 minutes. The first audition in theatre is usually step one in the selection process.

If you are being considered for the part, you are called back to audition again. This may happen several times before a decision is made.

Preparing yourself for an audition of any kind takes hard work. “The important thing to remember is that you can never over-prepare in terms of what you have available at your fingers to impress your auditors. Sometimes there is no rhyme nor reason as to what they want to see.” (Marlane O’Brien, Actress)

Remember that preparation has a positive effect on your overall training. Remember, too, that:

“You don’t get a job just because you’re hard working. Some performers work really hard but don’t get cast. They may just not fit in with a director’s image.” (Jan Miller, Actress)

“Jobs are limited and Artistic Directors usually have a good number (of candidates) to choose from. It’s not easy to get that first meaty role. Often you just have to wait for the right role to come around.” (Brian Paisley, Producer, Edmonton Fringe Festival)

Rejections are something even the best actor has to face:

“To the strong they are discouraging, to the weak, disastrous.”
From Robert Cohen, *Acting Professionally: Raw Facts about Career Acting*. Barnes & Noble Books, 1977.

“If you didn’t get the job you aren’t necessarily bad. In the end casting is an individual set of choices on a director’s part.”
(Martin Kinch, Artistic Director, Theatre Calgary)

Learning to have confidence in yourself despite rejections and to wait “creatively” between parts is a way to keep your energy and enthusiasm high.

II. EFFECTIVELY MARKETING YOURSELF

Marketing yourself is more than just sending out resumes. Many artists have a negative attitude about selling their work. They are convinced it is vulgar, cheap, insulting or even destructive to the art. The obvious question seems to be: “Can they afford to maintain that attitude?” The answer is a categorical “NO”. Just as theatres need an effective marketing strategy to compete for the consumers’ entertainment dollar, so, too, do actors need to learn effective marketing to ensure their own survival.

John Doe, actor extraordinaire, thinks he’s got it made. He’s based himself in City X, a medium-sized Canadian city, and has worked there consistently for three years. Many would envy his success, right? Hold on. His story’s not yet over. The next year he finds to his dismay that rather than doing four to five shows a year, he’s only doing one or two. “Ah well,” he thinks, “Nothing to worry about. Next year will be better.” However, next year rolls around and old J.D. finds he can’t even get arrested as an actor in his beloved City X. Panic sets in; confidence takes a nose-dive and poor old J.D. has his car repossessed. At this point, J.D. seriously considers going back to school for retraining. Another fine actor bites the dust.

While this little scenario may appear simplistic, it does happen. But it needn’t happen to you. Complacency is an insidious disease and actors are certainly not immune to it.

First, no matter how talented you may be, no matter how healthy a theatre community may appear, and no matter how steadily you’ve worked, it is inevitable that the time will come when local directors and even audiences will tire of you. You will become a victim of over-exposure. There’s a great big bountiful country out there waiting to be exploited. Toronto, New York, or Los Angeles are not the only alternatives, although there may come a time in your career when it’s right to move there. In the West alone, there are enough theatres to keep many an actor gainfully employed for an entire career. Historically, actors have always had something of the gypsy

in them. They went where the work was; it was necessary for their survival. It is necessary for *your* survival, as an actor moving into the 1990s, to expand your horizons and to avoid constricting boundaries. Working in one place too long is like overfarming fertile soil; inevitably it will become barren.

Here are some comments from actors who have realized the pitfalls of confining themselves to one location:

“Because I had a family and a husband who was a full-time theatre professional, I could pretty much act when I wanted. We weren’t reliant on my acting income. But it seems to me that in order to make a decent living as an actor, you have to be mobile. An actor’s appeal in a given city happens in cycles, so an actor who works a lot in one city runs the risk of over-exposure. Inevitably, someone who is getting, say, five to six shows a season will end up getting only one to two shows. Eventually, no matter who you are, you’re going to have to move on.”
(Judy Mahbey, Actress)

“If the director from MTC or Persephone is in town holding auditions, do yourself a favor and go to them. You can’t afford to limit your options. Edmonton has an exceptionally strong talent pool and the theatres here can’t absorb all of it. So, I’ve learned not to create false boundaries for myself. Now, whenever the opportunity presents itself, I pursue work outside of Edmonton.” (John B. Lowe, Actor)

The Professional Resume

A resume is an important item when it comes to getting an audition and eventually a job. First, it tells the director where and how to get in touch with you. Your resume should always have:

- Your name in **BOLD PRINT** at the top.
- Your current address and telephone number.
- A permanent address. If this isn’t appropriate, it may be wise to give an alternate address (e.g. that of a reliable friend) in case you’re away and it is urgent to contact you.
- Your vital statistics: height, weight, hair and eye color, and

union affiliations. Inclusion of age is controversial; some actors feel it will prejudice whoever is casting. Use your own discretion. Presumably your photo will speak for itself. One solution is to include your age and the age range you play.

- Education: university, college, professional classes and workshops. Include educational background even if it is not directly related to drama.

Keep your resume short. A one-page resume is recommended. In fact, a one-sided, one-page resume can be attached to the reverse side of your resume photo. Make sure your name and a contact number are on the photo, as the two sheets may get separated.

Organize your resume logically with your most impressive or most recent credits first. List your role, the play, when and where it was performed and who directed it.

Type your resume neatly and proofread it to ensure that there are no typos or misspelled words. Your resume speaks for you, so make sure it looks professional.

Since you will be constantly updating your resume, it is not advisable to have it typeset.

The following resume is an example of a good arrangement for all the salient details of a professional resume. It is a sample only. Its contents are fictional and not a comment on any organization or individual.

RESUME

LENA GRAHAM

Actress

Current Address:
10004 - 104 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5M 1X6
(403) 555-3210

Permanent Address (Parents):
11115 Windermere Cres. S.E.
Calgary, Alberta
T2H 3C1
(403) 555-6986

Union Affiliations: C.A.E.A., A.C.T.R.A.

Height: 5'7"

Hair: Auburn

Weight: 132 lbs.

Eyes: Hazel

SELECTED ACTING EXPERIENCE

LIVE THEATRE

Elizabeth (support)	Richard III	Stratford; 1988	<i>Director</i>
Catherine (principal)	Doc	Neptune; 1987	<i>Director</i>
Wineva (principal)	Criminals in Love	Theatre Calgary; 1986	<i>Director</i>
Christy (principal)	Quiet in The Land	Citadel; 1985	<i>Director</i>

FILM and T.V.

Actor (principal)	Loyalties	Independent	<i>Director</i>
Actor (S.O.C.)	T.V. Commercial IKEA	ITV	<i>Director</i>

RADIO

Catherine (principal)	Doc	CBC Morningside	<i>Director</i>
Sarah (principal)	Memoirs	CBC Vanishing Point	<i>Director</i>

TRAINING

University of Alberta (B.F.A. Drama); Ballet (R.A.D. elementary),
Mime - Mime Company Unlimited; "Acting Shakespeare Today"
Workshop, University of Calgary.

Skills: Dance, Singing, Mime, Piano (Grade 10)

Hobbies: Tennis, Hiking, Reading, Swimming, Sculpting

REFERENCES AND DEMO REEL AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Photos

A resume photo is important. Directors use photos to remember faces and names when they're casting. The photo is also used as an introduction. You can send it to distant, unknown professionals or put it in "Face to Face", the casting directory of the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA). There really are people across Canada, sitting in rooms, poring over photos, trying to find faces for parts. Make yours look good!

Choosing a photo involves choosing an image. You are trying to sell yourself, so pick an image that shows off your best qualities. Advice on your final choice from friends, theatre professionals or an agent is helpful.

You may want different photos for different media. Smiles and teeth work well for television and commercials but a more serious photo is appropriate for film and theatre. However, most actors use a single photo for all their work.

Most resume photos are head and shoulder shots. You can get composite photos with several angle shots and a full-length view. These are most effectively used by models. Try something different, but remember casting people go through files and files of photos. They tend to be irritated by photos that don't show a clean, clear image.

There are a few basics for any photo you choose:

- 8" x 10", usually black and white (this is a financial concern), with your name and phone number on it.
- Current.
- Really look like you. No touch ups. You may like a touched up or younger photo of yourself but it doesn't serve the purpose for which it's designed. Get a new photo if you change your hair style or some other feature significantly.
- Clean and simple. Avoid hats or distracting, unnecessary accessories.
- Don't have a distracting background. Avoid plants that appear to grow out of your head.

- Choose between studio or a more casual look depending on the image you are selling. Casting directors suggest natural lighting and nothing too artsy, such as heavily accented backlighting.
- Make sure both sides of your face are visible.
- A full head shot is preferable.

Once you have chosen your photo, get it mass-produced by a reputable reproduction lab. If you are at the University of Alberta, check with the campus Photo Services, 432-4186. Galbraith Reproductions Limited in Toronto is a reliable lab; 420 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 2S6 (416) 923-1106.

You will need a good supply of these photos and with such labs, the price per photo decreases with the number of prints ordered.

The following are 1988 costs at Galbraith Reproductions:

Price Per Print

5 prints	\$2.75
25 prints	\$1.45
100 prints	\$0.89
250 prints	\$0.87
500 prints	\$0.86

In Edmonton, Ed Ellis Photography does both resume photos and mass produced reproductions. Their address is: 10301 - 108 Street, T5J 1L7 (403) 426-0466.

Reproduction costs at Ed Ellis Photography are:

25 prints black and white or color	\$65.00
50 prints black and white or color	\$85.00
100 prints black and white or color	\$140.00

Demo Reels And Videotapes

A recording of your voice narrating, singing or whatever, is one of an actor's professional tools. The recording, called a demo reel, can be sent to film, television and theatre companies to introduce or

remind directors of your vocal range. If you do have a demo reel, tell people it's available (e.g. see sample resume).

A videotape of your work can also be an effective marketing tool. Unfortunately, it can work against you if it isn't a good quality production. Auditors may mistake poor production values for poor performance values. A well-conceived and produced videotape can preserve the energy and vitality of the original live performance.

The cost of a videotape reel can vary greatly. If you have performed on film or tape already, your demo tape can use cuts from these performances. Get a realistic projected cost before you go ahead with any idea.

Getting To Know You

Make yourself known. Send a short resume with your most important credits and a photo to: artistic directors of theatres (see Directory of Professional Theatres in Alberta – Appendices), casting directors, A.C.T.R.A. and Equity reps, television stations, film companies and independent producers.

A resume without a *current* phone number and address usually winds up in the garbage. A photo without a name on it can get separated from the resume and become useless.

Once you have sent out your resumes, call one to two weeks later for an individual appointment. Not all the contacts will be able to see you just then, but you will have made the important first step.

Keep in contact with these people to find out what's happening and to remind them that you are available. Keep a current address and telephone number in their files. Unless you have an agent whose number is on the resume, you can miss out on possible parts if people can't contact you.

“Talented actors may get less work than less-talented actors if they lack perseverance or if they can't be found because, for example, their number is disconnected.” (Margaret Mooney, Artistic Co-ordinator, Citadel Theatre)

General auditions are another important reason for contacting and keeping a current number on file with theatres. These auditions are not always advertised extensively. You may hear about them by word of mouth or by checking with the theatre or Equity, but why take a chance? Contact them first.

The Citadel Theatre, for example, holds an annual open audition. If you are a new actor on the scene, and your resume and photo are on file, they will contact you to come to the audition. Obviously step number one in getting an audition is to send out your resume and photo.

Once you have made initial contact with theatre, film and T.V. companies, keep in contact for coming productions and specific auditions.

Contact the professional associations. This applies to theatre, film, television and radio. Roberta Mayer, N.F.B. Production Co-ordinator in Edmonton, suggests that the best way to find out about any of their auditions is to contact the professional organizations; in this case, A.C.T.R.A., and the casting directors. Most production companies don't want to be deluged with ambitious actors. The professional organizations exist, among other things, to inform you of what's happening.

The reality of the acting business is that it's not enough to rely on contact with A.C.T.R.A. or even a casting director. Some directors do not inform A.C.T.R.A. or Equity immediately of upcoming auditions. Not all producers or directors use a casting director. It is very important to keep in touch with these professional associations, but you may want to complement this with your own contact.

Invite key people to performances in which you are acting. Inform them of screenings of T.V. shows or films in which you have performed. Most directors prefer to see actors in other conditions than an audition and appreciate being notified. Many directors indicate that when they cast a show, they will better remember the people whose work they have already seen.

Remember the alternatives to the traditional audition. Larry Yachimec, last season's recipient of the Sterling Award for Best Actor in a Supporting Role, favors the non-traditional approach.

"If you don't feel comfortable with auditions or don't think they ever manage to be a true reflection of your ability, don't give up hope. There are other ways of being seen – The Fringe, M.F.A. shows, going to an opening, or even the bar at The Strath – it's too bad they don't have Pub Night at McCauley Plaza anymore...everybody was there."

According to Brian Paisley, The Edmonton Fringe Festival Producer, one impetus behind the festival was to create an opportunity for actors, directors, etc., to show their work and avoid auditioning.

"Auditions are such a limited time period to show your 'stuff' and are high-pressure situations. This was one motivating factor behind the Fringe. It's almost a nine-day audition which lets actors, directors, playwrights and other theatre professionals show what they can do in plays and roles that they themselves choose."

Go to general auditions. Most theatres have one or two general calls a year so the artistic director can have a brief view of the talent available for the season. These are important auditions for you if directors don't yet know you and haven't seen any of your work. While general auditions cannot be counted on to get a part, artistic directors indicate that they often ask actors seen for the first time in general audition to audition for specific parts.

If you are called back after a general audition call, WEAR THE SAME OUTFIT that you did at the first call. It helps the auditors remember who you are and what you did.

The Artistic Director of Theatre Calgary, Martin Kinch, explains that he doesn't have "a lot of faith in general auditions".

"[They are] usually done by a new director to a city or theatre."

William Fisher, Artistic Associate of the Citadel Theatre, is wary of the general audition.

“They put a lot of pressure on the actor and on the director. The atmosphere is tough and they can even be a little negative.”

Instead he prefers to interview actors who call him for an appointment. After the initial meeting, he may then call them to audition for specific roles.

“Then the actors are usually more relaxed as they know me a little.”

Nevertheless, general auditions are important opportunities for actors to meet with directors and attendance is suggested.

What Else Should I Remember?

Get psyched up for an audition; there is only a short time to impress. Time is always at a premium in theatre, film, television and radio, so be punctual for interviews and auditions. In fact, be early so you feel prepared when it is your turn. Auditions are usually no longer than 20 minutes, and if you are late, you will probably only get the remaining time. If you are unavoidably delayed, phone or briefly explain when you do arrive.

Warm up before the audition. It may be worth your while to telephone the theatre before your audition and ask if there is a room in which to warm up.

Be prepared for your audition. Preparation will give you more confidence, even if your auditors prefer to conduct mainly improvisations. If you've been sent a script, read it. If there is a script, but it wasn't sent to you, ask if you can look at it before the audition.

Some difficult-to-obtain contemporary scripts are available at:

Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism Library
11th Floor, C.N. Tower
10004 - 104 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 0K5
(403) 427-2571
Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

If the script you want is not yet available, or if it is an adaptation, try to get the original work. It will give you a general idea of plot and characters.

When auditors request that you perform two pieces of contrasting style, have them well prepared. It's also advisable to practise the pieces in different locations so that the audition location itself doesn't throw you off. It's important to be prepared for anything and for any style of auditioning (see page 7).

"Be prepared. Never assume anything, especially if the call is vague and uninformative. If you're auditioning for a musical, take your music and some dancing clothes. In the end, you and you alone, are responsible for not getting a job if you are unprepared." (Marlane O'Brien, Actress)

"I expect everyone who is trained properly to do a good audition piece. That includes having actually read the entire script from which their monologue is taken." (Martin Kinch, Artistic Director of Theatre Calgary)

When auditioning for film or television be prepared to see a video camera and camera person at the audition. The auditors usually decide who will play a role after they have looked at the videotapes of the auditions. Often the videotapes are sent to a casting agency in another city to be evaluated with actors from other provinces.

If you are auditioning for a specific part, directors suggest that you wear something in character. Full costume regalia is not recommended. If, for example, your idea of what is “in character” is very different from the director’s idea, he may not be able to “see” you in the part for which he’s casting. If you don’t try to dress in character, but wear something totally different from the part for which you’re auditioning, you can ruin your chance at being cast. Several directors mentioned that, in several instances, the outfit an actor wears may be the deciding factor in the final casting choice.

“I was looking for a cowboy for this role and one actor came dressed as a cowboy. It was so easy to see him in the part...he got it.” (Bartley Bard, Artistic Director of Lunchbox Theatre)

Once again, use your own judgement. You can dress more flamboyantly for some theatres than for others, so do a little research and find out the kind of works they do, and something about their approach to theatre. If in doubt, wear understated clothes. Slacks, a T-shirt and running shoes are appropriate for an audition as long as they are clean and neat!

Be professional in the audition. Don’t forget your resume and a photo. Even if you haven’t yet received your professional photos, take in a polaroid. Use anything that will help to make your face memorable.

Some nervousness at auditions is unavoidable and can be constructive. You have to learn to dissipate or harness the excess nervous energy. Do your warm up, take a walk, do yoga – anything that usually relaxes you. This will also help you to move easily and naturally once on stage.

When you get into the audition, listen to everything the auditors say. Listening is much harder when you’re nervous, but it helps to focus your attention. Then concentrate on what you are doing, not for whom you are doing it.

Treading The Line: Assertiveness Or Being A Pest

Theatre

Every theatre contacted in Alberta expressed interest in meeting new actors. Directors often cast actors whose work they know, but they like to see fresh faces and new talent. They are always interested in seeing you perform in other theatres, so inform them of where you are working.

Theatres with regular seasons should be contacted regularly, but not too often. Some directors suggest you call every two to three months. If you are aware of a theatre's season and the characters' descriptions do not apply to you, there's no point in phoning during the season. Wait until they are beginning to think about next season's productions.

Film and Television

In general, most television and film directors don't mind an actor calling them or sending in resumes and photos. However, the standard practice is to cast through a casting director or talent agent. So, although it doesn't hurt to contact local television stations or production companies, you should first register with a casting director or talent agent. Once you have done this, it is advisable to periodically contact them to let them know of your availability and to keep informed of upcoming projects. Not all film and television directors choose to use casting agencies; therefore, it would be reasonable to call those companies in which you are interested and determine their method of casting. Send them a resume if they ask for one and try to arrange to meet with them. A rule of thumb when dealing with prospective employers is to exercise restraint and to use common sense. No one wants to be harangued by an over-zealous actor.

Arvi Liimatainen is a film director at Kicking Horse Productions in Edmonton. He doesn't recommend that actors just drop by the production house, as Kicking Horse hires through a casting director. He feels actors are wasting their time, and often his, if they just drop by when no production is underway. He does, however, like to know what actors can do and appreciates receiving a note saying:

"Hi. I'm performing at this theatre or on this channel or in this film at _____. Watch me!"

The National Film Board North West Production Office in Edmonton likes to receive resumes and photos. In general, The National Film Board directors do their own casting. Many directors will do partial casting and will utilize a casting director for the remainder.

Creative Waiting

Actors need basic training. As in many professions, actors continue to build on that training throughout their career. The ability to control the body and voice can be improved and refined over the years.

Workshops, master classes and university or conservatory classes are useful, although somewhat scarce in Alberta. Music, dance, movement, and voice classes can all enrich an actor's training. Perhaps you just want to enrol in a gym class to keep your body well tuned.

Michael Dobbin, Artistic Director of Alberta Theatre Projects in Calgary, stresses the importance of actors building their bodies into a shape that complements their voices and the roles they aspire to play.

The A.C.T.R.A. and Equity newsletters publicize some of the workshops available to actors. Theatres occasionally offer workshops. C.B.C. Radio Calgary believes in the apprenticeship system, and holds workshops where young actors may participate with, and learn from, experienced actors.

The Banff School of Fine Arts offers master classes for the actor who has been working professionally for some time and wants to upgrade his skills and technique. These classes take place during the summer, which is an ideal alternative to working in Summer Stock (see the Professional Schools section for further information).

The workshops or classes you want to take may not always be available, so you may want to initiate them with other actors. Classes can simply be an opportunity to read, perform and be judged by your peers. Depending upon time, initiative and money, you may want to organize more formal workshops with experienced actors and directors as guest speakers.

If your special interest is in film or television, why not contact the local film and video co-operative and try to arrange a mutually-beneficial workshop.

Keep aware of what is going on nationally and internationally in theatre, film and television. Go to theatre and films whenever possible. Read books and periodicals in your field. These activities broaden your knowledge and can give you useful ideas and perspectives. The trade papers, such as CanPlay and CTR, will keep you up to date on transactions, trends and the names of people in your field.

Waiting creatively helps actors to keep up their skills and to maintain that important asset — enthusiasm. It is also an integral part of an actor's training, which is particularly important in a business where one may not work for extended periods of time.

III. CHOOSING THE APPROPRIATE AUDITION PIECES

Many theatres request that you perform two pieces of contrasting style; for example, classical and contemporary, or dramatic and comedy. The choice of audition pieces is often yours. But until you have developed a repertoire, choosing a piece can be difficult.

Directors are primarily interested in seeing how well you perform a piece, not in the piece itself. A piece that shows you at your best is an obvious advantage. Choose pieces that emphasize your skill and versatility. If you can sing, dance and act, do all three. The following comments may serve as guidelines:

“For me, an audition is a time for the actor to show everything he can do, including movement and musical skills.” (Brian Paisley, Producer, Edmonton Fringe Festival)

“I like actors to demonstrate different skills they cite on a resume: tap, jazz, combat with prepared (brief) performance pieces; or to choose monologues in which these skills are exhibited.” (Gyllian Raby, Artistic Director, Northern Light Theatre)

Audiences of stage and screen have diverse palates. They want comedy, drama, musicals, serious fare and light entertainment.

It isn't surprising then that the versatile actor is often in demand.

“Versatility is extremely valuable. It is imperative that actors continue to take classes in acting, singing and dancing so as not to limit themselves to one form.” (Brian Paisley)

“It stands to reason that the more versatile you are, the more you’ll work. If you’ve never done any fencing before and you covet the role of Zastrozzi, I’d suggest you go out and get lessons real soon.” (Michael D. James, Freelance Director)

Naturally, your style of audition will depend on the type of theatre or role for which you are auditioning. A cabaret style audition isn’t appropriate if you are trying out for Lady Macbeth. However, the opposite may not be true. One director indicated that he likes to see Shakespearean audition pieces, even when he is casting for musical comedy, because they illustrate many of the actor’s skills.

“In general, know your theatre and know what you are auditioning for.” (Stephen Heatley, Artistic Director of Theatre Network)

“Study the seasons you are auditioning for and pick audition pieces that will show off qualities relevant to roles you hope to be cast for.” (Rick McNair, Artistic Director, Manitoba Theatre Centre)

“Choose a piece that shows you off, your ability to develop character and to work with a role.” (Ben Henderson, Freelance Director)

Catalyst Theatre, for example, looks for some different qualities in actors than those that might traditionally be emphasized. Catalyst plays to special audiences including prisons, hospitals and social service agencies. As a result, they look for people with a certain kind of attitude, flexibility, skill and life experience. To find these qualities, Catalyst uses improvisations in auditioning.

Many directors suggest that when auditioning for a specific part, you should avoid choosing a role from the play for which the theatre is actually casting. Choose instead a similar part. However, you should be familiar with the play for which you are auditioning in any case as you may be asked to do a cold reading.

When choosing an audition piece it’s better to stay away from last year’s top five theatre hits or the top 10 from university drama

courses. The same is true for songs. Many other actors will choose those pieces. Numerous directors expressed dismay at having to watch the same “famous” speeches performed by actor after actor.

Rick McNair, for example, suggests that you don’t do the “Ring Speech” from *Twelfth Night*.

Mark Schoenberg suggests that you stay away from Emily’s “Good-bye World” from *Our Town*, and from the prologue to *Henry V*. An Equity spokesperson advises that you don’t do anything from *The Glass Menagerie* or *The Sound of Music*.

Many professionals suggest that you don’t venture too far afield into new or obscure works. Several Artistic Directors indicated that they usually appreciate being familiar with the piece an actor performs.

Martin Kinch, Artistic Director of Theatre Calgary says he appreciates “pieces [that] suggest the actor has some acquaintance with Canadian work.”

There are many parts to choose from and you should always try to make the piece “your own.” But be careful.

“I regard it as a pretension when people write their own pieces.”
(Mark Schoenberg, Artistic Associate, Citadel Theatre)

Directors suggest that you pick a piece within your realistic age range. Although you may have done much older parts at school, it is unlikely you will be cast professionally in a part 20 years your senior. At some point, every actor has to be honestly self-critical and determine his own image.

Physical type, age and artistic range all form image. These factors can determine the medium you work in and can help you to develop a good idea of roles within your range.

But don’t fall into the trap of typecasting *yourself*. Stories abound of the ‘exceptional case’ in which an actor who didn’t fit the director’s image, had that special quality that got him the role.

Pick a piece that is within your range, with which you feel comfortable and that you know shows you off to advantage:

“An audition should be short and good and leave them wanting more.” (Leslie Yeo, Actor/Director)

Two to three minutes per piece is a recommended length.

“I prefer the use of only one monologue, no more than three minutes long. Then I have more time to play around...to try different things...throw a few monkey wrenches at them. It allows me to get to know the actor better. (Jim Guedo, Artistic Director of Phoenix Theatre)

Dynamic pieces that illustrate various abilities are good ones to choose.

“Very serious, long pieces with little change can really put you off.” (Bartley Bard, Artistic Director of Lunchbox Theatre)

“I like actors to choose pieces which offer *real* rhythm, language and movement contrast; also, if possible, presentational variation soap box, 4th wall, master of ceremonies, soliloquy, etc.” (Gyllian Raby)

Ultimately you use your own discretion in choosing your audition piece. If a piece is well known, yet you feel comfortable with it and it shows you off to advantage, use it. However, performing something fresh may be in your best interest. Think of the tired director who has just seen the sixth Juliet that day.

Audition Books

There are numerous collections of “*Best Plays of 19__*” or similar collections to peruse when looking for potential audition pieces. Also, some theatre periodicals such as Canadian Theatre Review, The Drama Review, or American Theatre feature a new script every issue. Playwright’s Union of Canada’s CanPlay keeps you up-to-date on what’s happening on the national theatre scene. You can also check:

Bard, Margaret, Messaline, Peter, Newhouse, Miriam, ed. *And What Are You Going To Do For Us?*, a collection of audition pieces from Canadian plays, Simon & Pierre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. 1980.

Grumbach and Emerson, ed. *Actors Guide to Monologues: 700 Monologues from Classical and Modern Plays for Auditions and Class Work*. New York, N.Y. 1974.

Britton, Gaylyn, ed. *How To Become An Actor...And Survive*. Moonlighters Publishing Co., Toronto, Ontario, Canada. 1986.

Shurtleff, Michael. *Audition: Everything An Actor Needs To Know To Get The Part*. Walker & Co., New York, N.Y. 1978.

Lawrence, Eddie, ed. *57 Original Auditions For Actors: A Workbook of Monologues For Professional & Non-Professional Actors*. Meriwether Publishing Ltd., Colorado Springs, CO. 1983.

Early, Michael and Philippa Keil, ed. *Solo! The Best Monologues Of The 80's (Men)*. Applause Theatre Book Publishers, New York, N.Y. 1988.

Early, Michael and Philippa Keil, ed. *Solo! The Best Monologues Of The 80's (Women)*. Applause Theatre Book Publishers, New York, N.Y. 1988.

Shengold, Nina, ed. *The Actor's Book Of Contemporary Stage Monologues*. More than 150 monologues from over 70 playwrights. Penguin Books Canada Ltd., Markham, Ontario, Canada. 1987.

Distribution catalogues from play publishing houses:

Playwrights Union of Canada publishes a *Directory of Canadian Plays and Playwrights* which provides you with a brief description of the playwright, the plays he has written and a brief synopsis.

IV. DIFFERENT MEDIUMS, DIFFERENT APPROACHES

The type of medium affects the roles you play and will therefore influence the part for which you are auditioning.

Radio doesn't have the benefit of the visual element, so a good radio actor must be able to express and evoke a wide range of emotions, moods, and settings with his voice as his only instrument. Being adept at sight reading is also an essential skill.

Film and television are such intimate media that eyes alone can tell a story. The ability to express rapid changes of emotion visually without appearing mannered or melodramatic is essential in film and T.V. The theatrical actor is in danger of overacting or artificial acting in these media. The actor's talents need to be adjusted to an intimate level. Appearance is more critical because make-up cannot do the wonders in film and T.V. as it can on the stage. Tight camera shots allow the film audience to get very close to the actor.

Film and television emphasize naturalness and usually there is less rehearsal time. It has been suggested that these two factors lead casting people to look for actors with personalities very similar to those of the parts being cast. Nevertheless, acting skills are vitally important. An actor can be very close to the scripted character but not have enough range to play the role.

Auditioning for Musical Theatre

When auditioning for a musical or for musical theatre, you generally prepare two pieces that will show off your prime vocal range. The situation itself will differ depending on the size and nature of the musical. For any show an actor must be able to sing within the range of the music. Sometimes this will merely require that the actor carry a tune. For a full musical, however, a very strong voice is needed.

Actress Marlane O'Brien, last seen in Edmonton as Yvette in the Citadel's musical production of "Duddy," has been in many musicals and attended many auditions.

She feels that "there are no parameters in choosing a song other than what you can do with your voice. If you have more than one area of vocal strength, prepare two pieces and show them off."

Marlene Smith of Marlene Smith and Company in Toronto has produced a line of hit musicals including *Hair*, *Godspell*, *Ain't Misbehavin'* and most recently *Cats*. She suggests that choosing a song for auditioning is quite simple. "Just pick something to suit your best range. Don't necessarily do a piece from the show being cast. In fact, it's a little presumptuous to do one of the hit songs." You may suffer in the inevitable comparison to the singer who made it a hit.

"Keep in mind the type of musical that you are auditioning for, and try to sing songs with a similar style and mood if you decide not to sing from the show." (Faye Cohen, Actress)

"Choose songs and pieces that are close to you, that you do well and that you enjoy doing. Choose songs that are in your range and that you're confident about. Don't stretch your voice by trying to impress me with something flashy." (Doug Riske, Artistic Director, Sunshine Theatre)

It is difficult for an actor to make a living working solely in musicals in Canada. Most musical actors perform in cabarets, dinner theatres and the like, in addition to the occasional full-blown musical that is produced in one of Canada's major cities. Many of them perform more often in musical theatre than in musicals.

This is a survival tactic for the actor/singer since full musicals are so rarely produced in this country. In 1986/87 there were approximately nine musicals produced professionally in Alberta. Of this number, three had large casts and six were of the small cast revue style. In 1987/88 there were only about a half dozen musicals produced with only two having large casts.

“To work in theatre in Canada, is to move constantly from one city to another, one social unit to another, as an orphan whose talent is a key to the next foster home.” (Stellina Rusich, Actress)

Faye Cohen has acted in numerous musicals across Canada. She elucidates her personal viewpoint on musicals and the rigors of auditioning for them.

“Musical theatre is a joyous art form. It is a celebration of man and the world he lives in. A song occurs in a musical when an emotion becomes so great, that it exceeds the bounds of normal speech and must be sung. Yet, a song must be based strongly in reality or you are left with posturing and mannered acting. Musical theatre is a style, just as *commedia dell'arte* or Brecht or Shakespeare are styles.

“As in any theatrical style, truth is what is being sought. Even with the added technical difficulties of dance and melody, it must come from the heart and the mind.

“A musical theatre audition is not much different from an acting audition. One needs to prepare a song in the same manner that you would approach a monologue. First, look at the words. What am I saying? Why do I say it? How do I say it? All too frequently, actors put their emphasis upon melody and choreography as opposed to understanding what a song is about. Take the words out of the song and speak them. A good composer creates a melody which supports the lyrics - trust them.”

Most actors and singers learn songs from musicals by listening to original cast recordings. Great, but be warned! Make the song your own. You are you, not Frank Sinatra.

In an audition, you have only one chance to impress. One often hears the debate between the merits of singing a song from the show for which you are auditioning, or avoid it like the plague. The only rules to follow are to sing what you feel most comfortable with, and to perform well. Certainly, a familiarity with the music of a show is advantageous. If you make it to the call-backs, you are usually re-

quired to sing an excerpt from the show. A knowledge of the music and the book is advantageous and comforting during this tense experience.

Finally, make a song simple. Don't clutter it with extraneous movements. Your movements should be definite and in character. Anyone can sing. Whether you have trained extensively in opera, whether you merely speak your way through a song, whether you are in tune or not, or whether you read music or not, if you have done your homework, you can sell a song.

Musical theatre is an amazingly energetic and demanding theatrical form. Keep on taking classes in voice, movement and music. There is no substitute for technical proficiency. Often the attainment of a role will depend on your ability to execute a dance step or sing in the required range.

Training is essential, not only for personal growth but also to ensure against personal injury. This is a common plight among musical performers. Even while performing, take classes!

Auditions for full musicals can be fairly gruelling, as the comments from one Alberta actress attest. Susan Henley, a B.F.A. Acting graduate from the U. of A., who is presently (1988) engaged by the Stratford Festival in the title role in *Irma La Douce*, remembers a nerve-racking call-back for *Cats*. Although she didn't get the part, her experience as one of nine women from across Canada called back to sing the part of 'Grizabella' was an illuminating and valuable experience.

"You have to be patient and not let the competition get to you. At the first audition, I waited seven hours with about 300 other people. They called Equity first and then non-Equity people, taking in groups of 20 at a time. They eliminated 16 right away on the basis of looks. Then they started to eliminate on the basis of range.

"I brought my own music for two songs and sang both of them. Generally, if they are not interested they stop you after 16 bars and dismiss you with a "thank you". After I finished singing,

we had a small interview. I guess the audition lasted about 25 minutes in all.

“At the first audition, I wasn’t terribly dressed up. I just went in my dance clothes. But the choreographer took me aside and whispered that if I got a call-back I should really be a lot more dressed up. It’s pretty unusual from what I hear to get that kind of helpful advice.

“I was called back with eight other women to try for the part of Grizabella who sings “Memory”. For this audition I went really dressed up; a very nice dress, hair done up and lots of make-up because the part was for an older woman. We went in individually and sang a piece that we had been given several days before, by memory, in front of a panel of 10 to 12. What can I say... it was really nerve-wracking. Hopefully some of the panelists will be good contacts for the future.”

Stellina Rusich had this to say of her experience as an actress at the Charlottetown Festival:

“Tryouts for the Charlottetown Festival’s 1987 season were held nationally in the major cities. For my audition, I first went through a general audition call in Calgary. When I entered the audition room, Walter Learning, the Artistic Director of the Festival, welcomed me warmly and made me feel at ease, despite my intense nervousness—made tighter by a sleepless night and a long drive. Instead of leaping directly into the audition, Learning sat me down and we chatted for five minutes, and this relaxed me somewhat. After singing my first song, “Somewhere That’s Green” from *Little Shop of Horrors*, Learning asked me to perform a song I hadn’t prepared, but which I knew. It was a duet “Suddenly Seymour” from the same show. Comforted by the dialogue and the ease of the situation, I plunged into the duet with my accompanist, Richard Link, humming the male part. The fact that it was a duet, and unprepared, didn’t hinder the audition, but foreshadowed a willing commitment to the rehearsal process with open dialogue and communication between the director and actor. When putting together a cast for a long running show, or possibly a tour, a key

element in the audition process is for a director to determine whether or not the actor will be a good company member—not only in the show, but through rehearsal and the duration of a long run. After the Calgary audition, I received a call-back for an audition in Toronto, at which there were approximately 400 performers. For that audition, I was asked to specifically prepare a song from *Anne of Green Gables*, as well as another two pieces.

“I was engaged by the Festival, and for the summer played “Miss Stacey” in *Anne of Green Gables*, and the character “Reds” in *Are You Lonesome Tonight?*. *Are You Lonesome Tonight?* turned out to be an excellent opportunity because it has turned into a national tour.

“I say to women, in particular, who want to do musical theatre—the competition is fierce. You must be prepared. Know the theatre, the director, salary scales, and don’t deceive yourself about the necessary readiness and professional preparation required to get the job you desire.”

Janet Smith is a young Edmonton actress. She completed the first two of three years of her B.F.A. Acting training at the University of Alberta. Remarkably, in the midst of her training she has managed to secure principal roles in some high-profile professional projects over the past couple of years. During the summer of 1986 she was the female lead in the homegrown T.V. series *Hamilton’s Quest*; then she went on to play Janet in the popular hit musical, *The Rocky Horror Show* in the summer of 1987, followed by a yet to be determined role in *Hair* scheduled for a 1988 opening at Stage West in Calgary. Her big coup, however, was in being selected to be part of the National Touring Company of the smash-hit musical, *Les Misérables*.

She was asked about her experiences auditioning for a full-scale hit musical.

How did you happen to find out about the auditions for Les Misérables?

“I first learned of the auditions for a Canadian Tour of *Les Miserables* in the Equity Newsletter. It turned out that they were holding the Alberta ‘cattle-calls’ in Calgary. I was ecstatic – I loved the book and it happened that a friend of mine had a copy of the musical score and lent it to me a couple months back, and, well, I simply fell in love with it. I know it might sound silly, but I just had this feeling that it was going to happen for me – it had to.”

Did you do anything special to prepare for the audition?

“Well...nothing terribly out of the ordinary really. The audition notice had stipulated that we should prepare two contrasting songs – one ballad and one up-tempo. I suppose the trick is to find the right pieces – something that will show you off at your best and that you feel comfortable with. While I am quite confident about my singing ability, I had never considered myself to be a ‘belter’ per se, until one night when I was playing around with one of the numbers and discovered that I could, in fact, sing that way. Then I set about arranging several sessions with a voice coach to work on my voice and fine tune my songs. I mean we’re talking big stakes here; I didn’t want to blow it by being unprepared.”

Tell us about the actual audition.

“We got there early – I went with an actress friend of mine – did a good warmup, and waited patiently. We sat there for *three hours* on a cold, marble floor before our turn finally came up. You know how the prospect of auditioning in a foreign space can be daunting? Well, we decided on a course of action to combat this and turn it to our advantage. A few minutes before our turn was to come up, we would build up our energy outside the door, and then, when we were asked to enter we would ‘shoot’ all that energy into the space – in effect making the space our own. My girlfriend went first. Then when my number came up, I executed my entrance as planned, stopped, thought to myself, ‘Smith, how bad do you want this?’, and then I just went for it. First I did the upbeat, gutsy song, pulling out all stops and really belting it out. I really felt good about it – it

was the best I had ever done it. Next, I did a sweet and tender ballad to show them my vulnerable side. They (the auditors) were very positive about my audition. I was given the show music and scheduled for a Toronto callback.”

How did you present yourself at the callback?

“After the initial audition in Calgary, the director took me aside and suggested I wear something simple but form-fitting to show-off my figure. I’m told that receiving this kind of advice isn’t all that common, and is a good indication of how interested they are in you. I noticed that some of the other actresses arrived at the callback dressed to the nines – heavily made-up, fancy coiffures, pumps, the works. I don’t know, it’s hard to gauge, but I think that worked against them.”

What role are you playing in Les Miserables?

“At present, I only know that I’m in the company. I’m still awaiting confirmation as to whether I have been cast as Cosette or whether I will start out as an alternate or as an understudy to the role.”

Did you find it daunting being faced with such overwhelming competition, some of them high-powered? I understand there were close to 2,000 hopefuls.

“Personally I don’t worry about all the competition. It isn’t productive. It consumes too much energy. Rather, I prefer to focus on myself and what I have to do. Besides, I see the other actors as colleagues and potential friends – not adversaries. I try to maintain a healthy and balanced ego. As far as the audition itself, I went in expecting to be tested to the hilt, but I was treated very gently. Maybe it was because I was auditioning for the role of Cosette...you know, a very sweet and delicate soul...I don’t know. It was a very pleasant surprise to be treated like that. My experience is that you can’t afford to be intimidated going into an audition. I believe they want you to share your ability with them and if you make a good initial impression, they will treat you with respect.”

Do you intend to return to the U. of A. to complete your training?

"I honestly don't know. We'll have to see what happens. Personally, I feel that the most important part of my training happened in the first two years. The final year would be geared towards polishing one's skills and being put in front of an audience. Having worked professionally for more than two years now has taught me a great deal. Theatre School training is, without a doubt, important, but I think what you learn out there doing it is equally valuable, if not more so."

Nerve wracking or not, it's a good idea to go to as many auditions as possible. As Marlane O'Brien points out:

"Go to auditions for everything - film, theatre, T.V., commercials. I went to 30 auditions last summer and got one job. You may only get one job out of it but something may click...and often does, down the line."

William Fisher, Artistic Associate of the Citadel Theatre, noted that:

"it's a smart thing to go to auditions. It keeps your profile up, keeps you busy and keeps you in touch with what's going on in the business."

Electronic Media

Film and television auditions are significantly different from auditions for theatre. For one thing, you don't audition with prepared pieces. Anne Wheeler, the director of *Loyalties*, maintains that improvis are better than prepared pieces for a film audition, as improvis are closer to the reality of acting for film. Film requires the actor to tone down and be instantly natural.

Film auditions may include an interview or, as Ms. Wheeler commented, "a casual talk to get a sense of what the actor can bring to a part from his or her own personal history."

The film audition is colored by the nature of the medium. The generally short rehearsal time means that rehearsal often takes place

immediately prior to shooting the scene. Usually less than one minute of a scene is shot at a time. Scenes are shot several times, with both close-ups and reaction shots, and out of sequence.

Film is constructed piece by piece and later cut into a continuous whole. Unlike the stage actor, the film actor never acts continuously for long periods of time.

In film work, a full script is usually sent to potential lead actors before the audition so they can read it and have the character in mind when they come to the audition. In the audition, Ms. Wheeler has an actor read part of the scripted role and then asks them to improvise in character.

“It lets me know if a person understands character, if he can maintain character and if I like him in that scene.”

Alternately, actors in film and television may be given a short excerpt from the script which they can look over when they arrive at the audition.

Mike Douglas of Douglas Communications Ltd. in Toronto, likes to use a two-minute section written for the audition that is similar to the real script but is more intensely dramatic and designed to test the actors.

“I try to create a challenging and intense environment that is very much like the demands of a film set. I move very close to the actors in the background so they can feel me around them, because crew people doing their thing (taking sound checks, adjusting and moving lights) behind the actors is a very big part of the film process.”

Jack Emack, Edmonton C.B.C. Television Drama Producer, admits that “people who want to get a look at the script in advance always impress me.”

Radio Drama

Martin Fishman, Radio Drama Producer, for CBC in Calgary had this to say about auditioning and the field of radio drama.

How does auditioning for radio differ from auditioning for theatre?

“The principle of auditioning for both mediums are the same. However, the difference is ultimately on radio, the actor will be effective and recognized solely by his voice. As such, voice demo tapes are very helpful in identifying a quality of voice that I require for casting.”

What advice do you have for preparing a voice demo tape?

“First, I would say do not go to a recording studio and produce an expensive tape. It is not necessary. A cassette recording on any home machine is fine. However, you must pay particular attention to avoiding basic distortions such as popping one’s p’s and placing one’s mouth too close to the microphone. Demonstrate vocal varieties such as accents and age range. These two are the most important. As for material, take something that is in dramatic form and not in short story or poetry form. Two minutes total length is fine because the significant impressions are made in that time.”

What is your advice to actors who want to do radio drama?

“First, listen to some radio drama. It is particularly frustrating to talk to an actor who has no frame of reference for the kind of radio work being done today and the kinds of skills that are necessary to do that work. If you are cast, you must do your homework before you come to the recording studio. As in film, time is at a premium. Rehearsal is minimal and professionalism is taken for granted.”

What are common misconceptions about acting for radio?

“The most common is actors thinking that acting for radio is just being a talking or reading head. Good radio acting is a physical

form which gives impression of a total character through the use of both voice and breath. Ultimately, radio drama is an intimate experience directed for an audience of one.”

How much radio drama is produced yearly?

“I set out to produce 30 to 40 segments of radio drama yearly. Over a hundred actors try out for parts and I would normally use approximately 40 different actors. The odds of working in radio are quite good. If one considers that in Alberta the largest percentage of engagements in media work is in radio, it is not an opportunity which should be looked at lightly. I am always on the lookout for fresh voices, and look forward to being contacted and receiving voice demo tapes.”

Mime

Kevin McKendrick, formerly of Arete Contemporary Mime Troupe, has a few pointers on mime. First he addresses the kinds of skills you need as a mime.

“Some study of theatre of a physical nature is a requisite for mimes. Since miming uses a lot of acrobatics and juggling, circus technique is very helpful. Some dance experience is also very useful although too much dance background may result in stiffness.

“If actors are particularly talented in expressing themselves physically, a company may take them on as apprentices whether or not they have much initial miming training. Training of course is an ongoing thing. Most professionals continue to organize and take workshops, classes and the like.”

Can mimes easily transfer to working in legitimate theatre?

“Many mimes have done theatre before deciding to specialize in mime. They are actors, of course, and generally it is fairly easy for them to transfer into legitimate theatre by going through the same audition process as every other actor.”

What opportunities are there for training and employment of mimes in Canada?

“There are two major schools in Canada that offer training in mime: Mime Company Unlimited in Toronto and The School of Mime Omnibus in Montreal.

“As for employment, there is one large professional mime company in each of Vancouver, Winnipeg, the Maritimes, Calgary and Edmonton. There are numerous professional mime companies in Toronto and Montreal. All of these companies are Equity companies. The average company has five members. Every year at least five or six employment opportunities become available in Canada. Some of these positions are not readily filled because there just aren’t enough applicants.

“Mime is a field with a fair amount of opportunity, especially for women. Every mime company has one or two females in it to balance the one or two males in the group. There are more opportunities for women simply because there just aren’t that many women mimes trained in Canada.

“One advantage in being part of a small group, as the mime companies usually are, is that you can create your own work. This makes you less dependent on others for employment and more able to express yourself creatively.”

V. OVERVIEW OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTORS IN ALBERTA 1982-1988

When starting out, an aspiring actor has many preconceptions about the acting business.

According to *A Survey of Trends in Alberta's Professional Acting Community, 1982 - 1988* (Lauris, Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism, 1988):

- The majority of actors continue to pursue an acting career in Alberta because they receive the majority of their income here, are known within the Alberta theatre community, and are hopeful about future prospects of work.
- The majority of theatre training was received from (1) university, (2) professional theatre school, and (3) on-the-job training. Training was chosen due to the reputation of school or staff and financial considerations. Most found on-the-job training to be the most beneficial to their career. University and theatre school training was considered as next useful. Over 80 per cent of the respondents' training was completed in Canada, in particular, the cities of: Edmonton, Calgary, Montreal and Toronto.
- Generally speaking, Alberta actors feel they are as well trained as any actor in Canada. The majority of the working actors surveyed were trained either at the University of Alberta or at a professional theatre school.
- Alberta actors, similar to their national counterparts, are generally dissatisfied with the remuneration of actors as compared to other income groups with similar levels of skill and education.

- Even with combined supplementary incomes, Alberta actors still make less than the average Albertan.
- The average actor's total income has been gradually increasing from \$13,300 (1982) to \$22,196 (1987).
- Approximately one in five actors in Alberta can be said to be working full-time in theatre (i.e., those employed 10-12 mos./yr.)
- The average theatre income for Alberta actors was \$7,392 in 1985, \$8,196 in 1986, and \$8,281 in 1987.
- The annual number of theatre engagements has declined from an average of four to three over the past couple of years.
- The majority of actors in Alberta feel that the province's media possibilities make up a less than satisfactory portion of a yearly income.
- Media employment income (a range of \$2,324 in 1984 to \$3,441 in 1987) represented less than 10 per cent of the average actor's income.
- Of media engagements, the largest percentage was in radio work (a range of 31 per cent to 60 per cent). Although radio work has declined since 1985, commercial work has increased from 12 per cent (1983) to 32 per cent (1987), television work has remained somewhat constant around 14 per cent, film work is at 10 per cent a year and industrial work dropped from about 15 per cent in 1982-84 to seven per cent in 1985-87, though it appears to be on the increase.
- Alberta actors supplement their income by teaching, doing media work, and working whatever odd jobs they can. Actors taking extra work as cab-drivers or waiters is no myth.

- Income from employment *other* than teaching, media or theatre (ranging from an average of \$3,449 in 1984 to \$13,212 in 1987) represented an increasing proportion of the actor's income: 9 per cent in 1982 to 36 per cent in 1987.
- Unless one has been trained as a teacher, or possesses a Master's Degree, teaching as a means of supplementing acting income is not a good prospect.
- Alberta actors are not prepared to up-root themselves to chase rainbows. Only if given a positive offer of acting work, would they move to the "big four" media centres.
- The "media carrot", offered by Toronto, Vancouver, New York and Los Angeles, is still tempting to Alberta actors who wish to further develop their careers.
- Out-of-province income for Alberta actors has decreased from 19 per cent in 1982 to nine per cent in 1987, implying fewer actors are working outside of the province to earn a living.
- The biggest obstacles in developing an acting career were stated as: being considered local, the low profile of theatre work, not being known in the theatre community and the interference of other necessary employment. Some other reasons listed frequently were: heavy competition for acting jobs, available personal time, being typecast in roles, the need for more training, not enough strong female roles (especially in film and TV work) and closed casting circles.

VI. SO YOU WANT TO TRY YOUR LUCK ELSEWHERE

At some point in your career, you may decide that the opportunities and type of work for which you are looking can't be found in Alberta. Many beginning actors find it necessary to work outside of Alberta, because those important first roles aren't all to be found here. Beginning actors base themselves in the West (say Edmonton or Calgary) and then audition in the major western cities. Gerry Potter, Artistic Director of Workshop West, indicated that there is probably not enough work to keep a beginning actor working in one city unless he is exceptional. He stressed the importance of young actors going to major centres to audition.

Travel is an important consideration even to the more established actor. Some actors choose to keep a residence in one place although they work across the country. Others decide to move to where they can find the greatest number of possibilities.

Robert Wisden is a recent B.F.A. Acting graduate from the University of Alberta and was nominated for a Genie Award for the made-for-television movie *9-B*. In 1986 he decided to move to Toronto.

He is presently focusing his energies on film and television and has achieved a good measure of success, having recently completed the shooting of *Banting and Best* with R.H. Thompson.

We asked him to share some of his insights and experiences of breaking into the highly-competitive Toronto scene:

Once you found a place to live in Toronto what were the first things you set about doing?

"When you make the big move to Toronto the first thing you absolutely must do is get yourself an agent. Once that's done, you set about introducing yourself by making appointments to see casting directors. Then you just have to sit back and wait until something comes up. The challenge, I suppose, is in

keeping yourself mentally and emotionally fit while waiting. Paying the rent is one thing, but keeping the creative juices flowing is extremely important. Personally, I paint and write to keep my head clear. So far I've been extremely fortunate, although I'd like to think that talent and hard work had more to do with it."

How important is it for an actor to present himself in a professional manner at a film audition?

"I remember this one particular screen test where I put in a full day playing the foil to everybody who came in to read that day. In reading with all those different people I could tell instantly which ones had their act together. They came in...on time...with no messing about...very professional...did a very clean and simple reading...no fussing about...and left. Believe me, the casting directors are impressed with that kind of straight ahead professional approach. Time is at a premium in the film industry so once you're in there you need to think on your feet...you better be prepared to make instant character decisions...if you have your wits about you you'll make them work. Again, keep it plain and simple."

Any advice to offer Alberta actors thinking of moving to Toronto?

"Well...I'd say...before making the move to Toronto make sure you are in good financial shape. You'll need to be, to carry you over the initial drought. The rent here is extremely high. Also, be very sure of what you're leaving behind. If you're getting lots of work in Edmonton and it looks like it'll continue, you'd probably be wiser staying there. You can always reconsider Toronto if and when you run into leaner times. It's harder to move back to Edmonton again once you've been out here. There is a lot of acting work here, so if you have any talent at all and you persevere you'll inevitably land something. Toronto is booming...there's an abundance of 'non-resume' work to carry you over."

What's the difference between Toronto and Edmonton in terms of employment possibilities for an actor?

"Toronto has real agents! You know, talent agents. Let's face it, Toronto is a 'big league' town, while Edmonton still has a basically small town mentality. Edmonton has a very strong talent bank, and is a marvelous training ground for the big league. The western acting contingent are doing extremely well here. In my opinion, if you're talented and have any ambition at all, you ultimately have to go to Toronto. It got to the point in Edmonton where I felt I had gone as far as I could...there wasn't really anybody I could learn from.

"You either grow as an actor or you remain static. Toronto gives you the opportunity to test yourself against the 'big boys.' Certainly, working side by side with R.H.(Thompson) gave me an added push."

Any last words of advice about auditioning in the big media centres?

"Most auditions are horrendous experiences...that's the nature of the beast...but you cannot allow yourself to get hung up over not getting a part. I've learned not to want a part too badly...the disappointment when you don't get it is too debilitating. The more I audition, the more resilient I become. If you're going to survive in the big leagues you can't afford to worry about not getting that last job. You've just got to get back at it."

"A few comments on commercials: "Residuals from commercials are what keep many people going in Toronto when they aren't working. Many actors will tell you that when you audition for a commercial you have to take the attitude that this is the most wonderful product known to man, even if you don't like it. You have to use your imagination sometimes, be creative. Make the best of it and really believe in it if you want to sell yourself to the producers."

John Hamelin was a well-established stage actor in Calgary. He decided to pursue a film and television career in Los Angeles. He wrote to us from his home in north Hollywood to say a few things about what life is really like for an actor in Los Angeles.

“When I left Canada I would rather have kept working a while longer and banked on the possibility of finally being seen or having a reputation spread, so a casting person or producer would bring me to Los Angeles. However, I had a possibility of getting my immigration papers and since they were/are as good as gold to get, I took advantage of the opportunity. Coming here legally is the best way.

“I was also getting tired of stage work and wanted to do more film and I wanted the challenge of something enormous.

“I have always felt it’s healthy to lay yourself on the line at regular intervals. In this case, I wanted to place myself in a world-wide market of competition and test my luck (that’s all it is here you know). In other words, I wanted to play with the Big Kids for a while. Understand that when I mention world-wide competition, I don’t confuse that with quality. They’re not necessarily synonymous, especially in Los Angeles, where artistic achievement is usually determined by the number of appearances you’ve made on shows like *Laverne & Shirley* or *Dukes of Hazzard*.

“I had no intention of studying in Los Angeles since I’d had a tremendous amount of professional experience (over 100 stage productions for example) and also because the academic approach is one I don’t personally favor.

“When I first arrived I wasn’t interested in theatre work because I was saturated with it. I wanted film work and exposure through that. I’ve recently started to feel the urge to do stage work again and have been sponsored into a “closed” group that does workshop scenes every week and occasional public projects. However, this is a membership group and each member pays dues to belong and of course there is no pay.

“That brings me to an issue I feel is an enormous problem here: there’s no equivalent of a Broadway or Off-Broadway. There may be about 100 theatres scattered (and I mean scattered...this city is incredibly spread out) all over Los Angeles and probably 98 percent are Equity Waiver, meaning the union has given permission for actors not to get paid and so the attitude is to do

shows in the hopes of being seen and consequently given some film / T.V. work. Of the theatres that pay, there is a tendency to use “names” or actors on the rise, trying to ensure the public attendance.

“Theatre auditions are usually ‘open’ auditions (cattle-calls) that can be attended by any union member (and sometimes non-union members after the union auditions) so you can sometimes have 250 actors in one day trying out for a play in which they won’t even get paid for their work.

Out here, the thought pattern is that going in for two auditions in six months and doing some lines in a sitcom is acting.

Getting into the Screen Actors Guild (the major union) is a catch-22. You can’t join unless you’re offered a SAG contract, but you can’t get the contract unless you’ve been to a SAG audition for the job and you can’t go to the SAG audition unless you’re a member of SAG. You can join SAG automatically if you’ve been a member of American Equity for a year.

“I got in on a technicality. Because I had joined Equity when it was just one union (before the Canadian/American segregation), I had been listed on the New York roster for about 10 years. So SAG had to let me in and I only had to pay half of the regular \$600 initiation fee. Most auditions here are cold readings. You’re called through your agent (and you really must have one) for an audition and you usually have a few minutes to look at the script just before you read. Sometimes you can pick up the “sides” the day before and work on the part at home the night before the actual audition.

“There are showcases and workshops which casting directors sometimes attend and you might do a prepared scene or a cold reading, depending on the nature of the workshop. However, there’s usually a fee of \$25 to \$40 for each meeting. There are also a number of “scams”. These are agencies who claim your photo will be sent to casting people for a rather large fee, but any casting person I’ve spoken to has indicated that sending a

bunch of unsolicited photos that way, unrelated to specific roles, ends up in the garbage because they hardly have enough time to deal with photos submitted by agents.

“Of course, getting auditions is infinitely more difficult if you don’t have an agent. I was very lucky. I got an agent in four days, but let me assure you it was totally luck of the draw...which is what looking for work in L.A. is...a crap shoot, arrows in the dark hoping to hit a target. I know people who have been here five years and still can’t get an agent (and it’s not for lack of talent). Talent doesn’t seem to be the major factor here...appearance does. Even then, I know people who are very good-looking, have super personalities, are very talented and yet they don’t work. It’s all luck in many ways.

“There are books out listing agents and casting people, but are they up-to-date? Casting people are constantly in motion, shifting from one show or studio to another. The Screen Actors Guild has a list of agents and casting people that is usually up-to-date, but is available only for SAG members. I guess it isn’t very difficult to meet someone who has the list or to find someone who will get one for you. There are any number of acting coaches (specializing in how to act for film, commercials, T.V. etc.) but their quality can vary as greatly as their numbers.

“A good photo is absolutely necessary and finding a good photographer can be costly. And then there are reproductions and resumes, but they can usually be had for reasonable rates. Very rarely do you need a classical audition piece, since the emphasis is on contemporary stuff, as you can tell by watching a little television.

“There’s a lot of theory about how stage actors should make the transition to film/T.V. style of acting/auditioning. However, I feel that a truly decent actor has little problem switching mediums, based on the theory that the best acting is just talking, communicating directly, and the only difference in mediums is reducing the size of the “truth” to a film level. I believe you still need to maintain a theatre energy.

“Most of the casting people I’ve spoken to feel that 80 per cent of an audition is won or lost on the basis of the interview, not the reading, so you must be focused, you must connect with the casting person, producer, director, whoever. And try to forget about the possible (probable) rejection and relax...casting people need to feel confidence in you. And you must always keep your mind on the quality of your work and do whatever you must to keep that alive. I spend time if not every day, then every couple of days, reading a play out loud, working on a monologue, studying television and movies to see what makes certain performances work. There’s a harmful non-acting style that television has fostered and you owe it to yourself to avoid falling into it.

“It’s rough being an actor, but especially in this town. Getting somewhere seems to have more to do with your psychological make-up than your talent. You have to develop a tough hide without losing delicate sensibilities; you have to put up with long periods when absolutely nothing is happening for you. You have to be able to watch people with cosmetic appeal often getting jobs over more talented people and realize that they usually don’t last very long.

“They say it’s not what, but who you know. But I know people who are friends with major stars or who have spouses in casting departments and who haven’t benefited from their contacts. And it isn’t because they can’t act. There seem to be very few rules to pin down regarding how to get work or why you get work. There seems very little logic to it.

“To a good extent, the industry is run by corporations now and that has a detrimental effect on the esthetics of the business.

“Things seem to be so removed from a semblance of art. Writing tends to be mediocre and the acting gets careless because the actors get lazy. A lot of actors (especially series actors) behave like investors.

“For every part you get you might lose 20 to 30 parts for reasons you can find very difficult to accept (eyebrows too thick, too

old, not enough wrinkles, timbre of your voice, too strong, not good-looking enough, too strong a sexual quality). I mean the reasons get pretty bizarre. You can hear any number of reasons within a three-week span. You must learn to deal with rejection. If you don't get a part, don't feel personally rejected. There are approximately 54,000 members in the Screen Actors Guild and 85 per cent are unemployed at any given time (that includes big name actors). Fifty-seven per cent of SAG members earn under \$1,000 a year.

"For me, the experience has been frustrating but very maturing. If I can relax in Los Angeles, I can probably relax anywhere. And while you can find levels of all this nonsense wherever you're trying to be an actor, the stakes here are enormous. If you break through the rewards can be tremendous, both practically and esthetically. Having a bit of clout can allow you to work much more in ways you choose.

"If I have painted a rather depressing picture, that is my intention...Los Angeles makes you feel you could be here and anonymous for the rest of your life. Whether or not I end up back in Canada is still an unknown...it depends on how long I want to put up with all this silliness.

"And having said all this and considered it, there's something that overrides all of it; Ruth Gordon was once asked how she managed to survive so many years in the business, especially the many during which she had been ignored and unappreciated. She said "Never pay attention to the facts."

Eric Kramer, once an Edmonton-based actor, is a recent example of 'a local boy who made good'. He was contacted in Los Angeles and queried on his career developments.

How did you happen to land the role of Thor in the made-for-T.V. movie, The Return of the Incredible Hulk?

"Last year I was doing Larry Shue's *The Foreigner* at Stage West with Gary Sandy (of WKRP fame) and we took it on tour to L.A. where it was seen by David Windsor, the agent. He

ended up picking me up as a client and soon after lined me up with an audition for the *Hulk* movie. I landed the role, the movie was shot, and that led to talks about potentially doing a *Mighty Thor* series. NBC is currently doing research, market analysis, that sort of thing, to determine whether there is sufficient interest to go ahead with the project. It's a producer's game right now, which is somewhat frustrating because it could be months before I find out what's happening, especially now with the writer's strike dragging on. Nothing's going on. Everything, at least in T.V., has ground to a halt."

Are you doing any stage work out there, or are you focusing mainly on film and T.V.?

"Right now I have five possibles in the air. *Thor*; three films, of which one looks like a really good prospect, although the casting process could last a couple of months; and, there will likely be a remount of *The Foreigner* at Las Palmas Theatre in L.A. Everything's in place for the remount except for the Rights. We're still waiting to hear from Larry Shue's agent. Fortunately, I was very well paid for the *Hulk* movie, so I can afford to sit tight until these things come together. I've been very lucky – things have been great for me here – I'd be foolish to leave now – besides where would I go after THIS?"

How often do you get out to audition when things are normal?

"When things are busy, when there's no writer's strike, I'm out to audition three times a week on average. I spent four weeks on the pilot shoot and, since I was under contract a month before that, I was kinda tied up – unable to pursue any other ventures."

What kind of adjustments have you had to make as far as auditioning goes?

"It's funny...nothing really changes. I mean it's basically the same process. The only thing that's different is the stakes are higher. There are so many people here, so much competition, that it is absolutely necessary to have a major 'weeding out' process. The initial weeding is handled by the casting agents.

Once you get past that, you get to see the director, then the producer, and finally, the executives. Fortunately, I got to know the director and producer of *The Return of the Incredible Hulk* quite early and that made the audition more relaxing for me. I don't know...I'm having fun...it's a whole new experience for me...I'm learning new things all the time. When things are kinda slow, I try to create things to do, try to get out meeting people, making contacts. There's this 'medieval group' out here that holds combat tournaments – I participate in them whenever I can. I really enjoy it and it keeps me fit, helps me maintain my stage fighting technique.”

Any advice to offer actors considering the move to L.A.?

“Well I think that if you're seriously thinking of moving out here, you have to have some money socked away: you have to be prepared in the total sense of the word. THIS TOWN IS OVERWHELMING. When I first got here I had no idea what to expect. When you realize what you're up against it's a very humbling experience. You are soon initiated into the reality of how the business works here in Tinseltown. It's taken awhile, but I now feel like I actually live here. I've developed a good network of friends and I feel good about my prospects here.”

Another strategy for gaining a foot-hold in the American market is to undertake one's training in the United States. Judith Hawking, B.F.A. 1985 (U. of A.), decided to continue her training by taking an M.F.A. in Acting at California Institute of the Arts, which she has now successfully completed. She is currently engaged in the Grove Theatre Festival at Garden Grove Theatre in Orange County, California.

What plays are you doing as part of Garden Grove's Shakespeare Festival?

“Tomorrow we'll be opening with *Richard II* in which I play Isabelle, followed by Adriana in *Comedy of Errors*, and finally, I will be playing Regan in *Lear*.”

Let's talk about training in the U.S. versus Canada. What are the perceived benefits for you as an actress, in training in the States?

"While the B.F.A. Acting Program at the U. of A. is a very good one and it tends to gear actors towards a classical training, which I think is great, personally I found that I came out of there 'acting with my head only.' I wanted to go to CalArts to get more guts and passion going, and, I wanted to put myself on the line more. Another benefit was the opportunity of learning from and working with such world class people as Libby Appel, Robert Benedetti and Fran Bennett. I certainly didn't go there for the connections, otherwise I would have gone to New York instead. There is an obvious East/West bias in the theatre here just as there is in Canada."

How has being in the U.S. without the support network you had grown accustomed to here, influenced the way you go about marketing yourself as an actress?

"First I'd like to mention an interesting personal revelation. Since moving here, I have come to feel so much more Canadian. I am more aware of my Canadian identity and I have developed a greater sense of pride in that identity, especially in lieu of the American political system – their foreign policies, interventionism, lack of social welfare programs, etc. We are so lucky in Canada. To get back to your question, I think that whenever you make a big change in your life, it forces you to work harder and it inspires you to take risks and make things happen for yourself. Otherwise, I imagine it's pretty much the same as it is everywhere in this business. You have to get out there and make the connections."

What are your short-term plans?

"Well, I want to go to New York to live and to work, but that probably won't be until at least 1989 – I need to get some money together first. Fortunately, I have a bi-coastal agent which will be very helpful when it comes time to move to New York. I won't have to worry about finding a new agent. I prefer theatre to film so it's only natural that New York and the East

Coast Regional Theatres are where I want to be. In the meantime, I've been offered a chance to join the Pacific Conservatory of Performing Arts (P.C.P.A) ensemble, which has ties with the school but is fully professional. That would provide me with a full season of gainful employment. At some point, once I have accumulated some good credits, I'd like to try to line up some 'gigs' with Stratford and The Shaw Festivals. Unfortunately, the old axiom, 'you have to make it abroad before you're given any recognition at home,' still appears to hold true."

APPENDICES

DIRECTORY OF PROFESSIONAL ALBERTA THEATRES

Directories of professional theatre companies are available in public libraries, including the Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism Library. For example, PACT Communications Centre publishes *Behind the Scenes*. It is a guide to Canadian non-profit professional theatres and theatre related resources. Even if you are unfamiliar with many of the theatres, the book will give you addresses to contact to find out more about them. American Directories such as *Theatre Profiles* are also available.

Alberta Professional Theatres

Theatre:	Alberta Theatre Projects
Address:	220 - 9th Ave. S.E. Calgary, Alberta T2G 5C4
Phone:	(403) 294-7475
Producing Director:	D. Michael Dobbin
Artistic Associate(s):	Bob White, Brian Deedrick
General Manager:	
Mandate:	Presents works from the new Canadian and international repertoire, with an emphasis on Canadian plays and play development. Host of the "playRites" Festival.
Facilities:	Martha Cohen Theatre - 450 seats. Rehearsal and production space available.
Season:	Fall/Winter
Repertoire:	Canadian, new Canadian, international, Theatre for Young Audiences, Classical
Submissions:	
Actor's Resumes	D. Michael Dobbin
No. of shows in season:	5-6
No. of actors in season:	30-40
% of Alta. actors in season:	60

% of Equity actors used:
Auditions:

Cast for the season:
Audition Req'ts:

Special Programs:

Affiliations:

95

Holds general auditions May-July in Calgary. Appointments from out of town actors welcome anytime. Core company varies from 6-10 Two contrasting modern pieces, song, and special skill. Professional workshops/classes, playwright-in-residence, children's programming
PACT, Equity

Theatre:

Address:

Phone:
Artistic Director:
Mandate:

Facilities:
Season:
Repertoire:

Submissions:
Actor's Resumes:
No. of shows in season:
No. of actors in season:
% of Alta. actors in season:
% of Equity actors used:
Auditions:

Audition Requirements:

Special Programs:
Affiliations:

Any Space Theatre

Box 1002
Banff, Alberta
T0L 0C0
(403) 762-4331
Shirley Tooke
To produce Summer Theatre for audiences in the Banff region. No fixed performance space. Summer Contemporary international. Predominantly comedies/or occasional musical.

Shirley Tooke
1
Varies
100
Varies
Held in May in Edmonton and Calgary.
Two contrasting contemporary pieces, cold readings.

Equity

Theatre:**Address:****Phone:****Artistic Director:****Administrative Director:****Mandate:****Facilities:****Season:****Repertoire:****Submissions:****Actor's Resumes:****No. of shows in season:****No. of actors in season:****% of Alta. actors in season:****% of Equity actors used:****Auditions:****Audition Requirements:****Special Programs:****Affiliations:****Boite a Popicos**

8520 - 91 St.

Edmonton, Alberta

T6C 3M9

(403) 469-7193

Claude Binet

Natalie Rousseau

To present family entertainment for the Franco-Albertan community.

Boite a Popicos Theatre - 150 seats.

October-April

New French-Canadian/French international, classic, original

Claude Binet

One mainstage, two tours

4

20

none

Held in May; appointments any-time; cast company for the season.

Fluent French; broad range of theatre skills; availability; commitment to stay for season. Emphasis on interview.

Community Weekend Program:

Friday - Theatre Sports; Saturday

Production; Sunday - Brunch

Non-equity

Theatre:

Address:

Phone:

Artistic Director:

Administrative Director:

Mandate:

Facilities:

Season:

Repertoire:

Submissions:

Actor's Resumes:

No. of shows in season:

No. of actors in season:

% of Alta. actors in season:

% of Equity actors used:

Auditions:

Audition Requirements:

Special Programs:

Affiliations:

Catalyst Theatre

#601, 10136 - 100 St.

Edmonton, Alberta

T5J 0P1

(403) 426-5840

Ruth Smillie

Denise Roy

To practice and promote the use of theatre for public education and as catalyst for social action.

No fixed performance space.

Year-round

Alternative (Social Action Popular Theatre), Educational

Ruth Smillie

10-12

15-30

95

66

Held in May/June; cast per project.

Two contrasting modern pieces, one song if you sing, plus interview.

Role plays; Conference shows, Popular Theatre Training Workshops.

PACT

Theatre:**Address:****Phone:****Artistic Director:****General Manager:****Mandate:****Facilities:****Season:****Repertoire:****Submissions:****Actor's Resumes:****No. of shows in season:****No. of actors in season:****% of Alta. actors in season:****% of Equity actors used:****Auditions:****Audition Requirements:****Special Programs:****Affiliations:****Chinook Theatre**

10329 - 83 Ave.

Edmonton, Alberta

T6E 2C6

(403) 448-9000

Dorothy Ann Haug

Cathrine Lowther

Operates a year-round program which includes provincial tours of theatre for young people, in-house productions guest theatre companies and musical groups. Also host to the Edmonton Fringe Festival each August.

Chinook Theatre - 175 seats

Rehearsal and production space available.

Fall/Winter/Summer

Cathrine Lowther

2

6-8

100

66

As needed, on a per show basis.

Depends on particular play and director.

PACT, Equity

Theatre:

Address:

Phone:

Artistic Director:

Artistic Associate(s):

Executive Director:

Producer and

General Manager:

Artistic Co-ordinator:

Mandate:

Facilities:

Season:

Repertoire:

Submissions:

Actor's Resumes:

No. of shows in season:

No. of actors in season:

% of Alta. actors in season:

% of Equity actors used:

Auditions:

Audition Requirements:

Special Programs:

Affiliations:

Citadel Theatre

9828 - 101A Ave.

Edmonton, Alberta

T5J 3C6

(403) 426-4811

Vacant

William Fisher, Mark Schoenberg

Joe Shoctor

Richard Dennison

Margaret Mooney

To present contemporary and classic works from the Canadian and international repertoire.

Shoctor Theatre - 685 seats

Rice Theatre - 240 seats

Maclab Theatre - 686 seats

Rehearsal and production space available.

Fall/Winter

Canadian, new Canadian, international, theatre for young audiences, classical.

Margaret Mooney

Shoctor - 6; Rice - 4; Maclab - 3

100-200

50

95

Generals in spring; auditions for specific roles held throughout the year; a number of shows directed by guest directors.

Depends on the particular play and director; usually two short contrasting modern pieces; bring photo/resume even if already on file.

Professional workshops/classes, children's programming, festivals PACT, Equity

Theatre:**Address:****Phone:****Artistic Director:****Mandate:****Facilities:****Season:****Repertoire:****Submissions:****Actor's Resumes:****No. of shows in season:****No. of actors in season:****% of Alta. actors in season:****% of Equity actors used:****Auditions:****Audition Requirements:****Special Programs:****Affiliations:****Glenmore Dinner Theatre**

7312 - 11 St. S.W.

Calgary, Alberta

T2V 1N1

(403) 259-3327

Zelda Dean

To produce comedy entertainment
with particular emphasis on offering
Canadian works in a commercial
venue.

Glenmore Dinner Theatre

– 150 seats

Year Round

Comedies/Canadian

Zelda Dean

7

25-30

100

40

Generals in May. Cast for the
season. Send resume anytime.
Two prepared contrasting contem-
porary pieces; song if you sing.
2-4 tours (8-11 wk. duration).

Theatre:

Address:

Phone:

Artistic Director:

Artistic Associate:

General Manager:

Mandate:

Facilities:

Season:

Repertoire:

Submissions:

Actor's Resumes:

No. of shows in season:

No. of actors in season:

% of Alta. actors in season:

% of Equity actors used:

Auditions:

Audition Requirements:

Special Programs:

Affiliations:

Loose Moose Theatre

2003 - McKnight Blvd. N.E.

Calgary, Alberta

T2E 6L2

(403) 250-1414

Keith Johnstone

Dennis Cahill

Debra Iozzi

Loose Moose is a semi-professional company dedicated to the development of Calgary talent and audience participation. Most of the original scripts are developed using Keith Johnstone's *Impro* techniques.

Loose Moose Theatre Simplex -
260 seats

Fall/Winter/Summer

New Canadian, T.Y.P., Alternative

Dennis Cahill

4-5 mainstage

50

100

none

Six to eight weeks prior to each production; announced in Calgary media; core company of 12.

Varies depending on the show; cold reading, improvisation.

Childrens Programming, Theatre

Sports, Late Night Theatre

PACT

Theatre:**Address:****Phone:****Artistic Director:****Business Manager:****Mandate:****Facilities:****Season:****Repertoire:****Submissions:****Actor's Resumes:****No. of shows in season:****No. of actors in season:****% of Alta. actors in season:****% of Equity actors used:****Auditions:****Audition Requirements:****Special Programs:****Affiliations:****Lunch Box Theatre**

Box 9027, Bow Valley Square II

205 - 5 Ave. S.W.

Calgary, Alberta

T2P 2W4

(403) 265-4292

Bartley Bard

Dorcas Eldridge

The production of one-act plays,
musicals and revues performed at
noon for those who work or shop in
downtown Calgary.

Lunchbox Theatre - 191 seats

Fall/Winter

New Canadian, International,
Classical.

Bartley Bard

8

30

66

90

Call to make appointment; cast on a
per show basis.Two pieces - at least one humorous
piece from contemporary repertoire.

PACT, Equity

Theatre:

Address:

Phone:

Artistic Director:

Mandate:

Facilities:

Season:

Repertoire:

Submissions:

Actor's Resumes:

No. of shows in season:

No. of actors in season:

% of Alta. actors in season:

% of Equity actors used:

Auditions:

Audition Requirements:

Special Programs:

Affiliations:

Nexus Theatre

68 McCauley Plaza

10025 Jasper Ave.

Edmonton, Alberta

T5J 2B8

(403) 429-3625

John Milton Branton

To produce high quality professional theatre in the one-act play format for lunchtime audiences in Edmonton's downtown core.

Nexus Theatre - 86 seats

Fall/Winter

Canadian/New, International.

John Milton Branton

5

10-14

100

66

Generals - May-June; callbacks Sept. Call for appointments anytime; cast on a per show basis. 2 contrasting pieces of any style, plus interview.

PACT, Equity

Theatre:**Address:****Phone:****Artistic Director:****General Manager:****Mandate:****Facilities:****Season:****Repertoire:****Submissions:****Actor's Resumes:****No. of shows in season:****No. of actors in season:****% of Alta. actors in season:****% of Equity actors used:****Auditions:****Audition Requirements:****Special Programs:****Affiliations:****Northern Light Theatre**

11516 - 103 St.

Edmonton, Alberta

T5G 2H9

(403) 471-1586

Gyllian Raby

Frank Glenfield

Northern Light Theatre originated from an artistic impulse, which is shared by the new Artistic Director, to create contemporary and classical productions which inspire theatre artists and attract a broad new audience: "Thinking Theatre for Exciting People".

Kaasa Theatre - 200 seats

Rehearsal space available.

Fall/Winter

Canadian/New, International,
Classical.

Gyllian Raby

4

20-25

100

95

Generals in June; appointments any-time; cast on a per show basis.

2 contrasting pieces of any style, plus interview; song, and physical routine, if possible.

Arts Team program: to enable group of artists (writer, director, designer, composer, performer) to develop production concept in collaboration.

Switch-on-Schools program: to take production information into classrooms and to bring students in to rehearsal.

PACT, Equity

Theatre:

Address:

Phone:

Artistic Director(s):

General Manager:

Mandate:

Facilities:

Season:

Repertoire:

Submissions:

Actor's Resumes:

No. of shows in season:

No. of actors in season:

% of Alta. actors in season:

% of Equity actors used:

Auditions:

Audition Requirements:

Special Programs:

Affiliations:

One Yellow Rabbit

#800, 630 - 8 Ave. S.W.

Calgary, Alberta

T2P 1G6

(403) 264-8131

Michael Stirling Green,

Blake Brooker

Grant Burns

Dedicated to the development of original material and Performance Theatre.

The Sky Room – 84-120 seats
Rehearsal and production space available.

Winter/Summer

Original scripts, Alternative.

Michael Stirling Green

4-5

15

66

66

Announce auditions when required.
We go through resumes on file and then contact people we would like to work with.

Your choice - whatever shows you off at your best. We look for originality, craft, and physical dexterity.

Professional workshops/classes

PACT

Theatre:**Address:****Phone:****Artistic Director:****General Manager:****Mandate:****Facilities:****Season:****Repertoire:****Submissions:****Actor's Resumes:****No. of shows in season:****No. of actors in season:****% of Alta. actors in season:****% of Equity actors used:****Auditions:****Audition Requirements:****Special Programs:****Affiliations:****Phoenix Theatre**

9638 - 101A Ave.

Edmonton, Alberta

T5H 0C7

(403) 429-4015

Jim Guedo

Brenda O'Donnell

The Phoenix presents controversial,
contemporary theatre dealing with
socially relevant issues.

Kaasa Theatre - 215 seats

Second Stage - 150 seats

Fall/Winter/Summer

Canadian/New, International,
Alternative.

Jim Guedo

4

20-25

75

66

Generals in May; call for appoint-
ment; cast for the season.One contemporary piece preferred,
plus interview.Alternative programming on
Second Stage.

PACT, Equity

Theatre:

Address:

Phone:

Theatre Supervisor:

Mandate:

Facilities:

Season:

Repertoire:

Submissions:

Actor's Resumes:

No. of shows in season:

No. of actors in season:

% of Alta. actors in season:

% of Equity actors used:

Auditions:

Audition Requirements:

Affiliations:

Pleiades Theatre

Alberta Science Centre and
Centennial Planetarium
P.O. Box 2100, Postal Stn. M
Calgary, Alberta
T2P 2M5

(403) 221-3700

Georgie Collins

To operate a theatre to entertain the
people of Calgary and to serve as a
training theatre for top amateur
talent.

Theatre – 227 seats. No rehearsal
space available.

Year round

Mystery Theatre

Georgie Collins

4

17

25

Generals in March; we contact
actors from this and resumes.

No prepared pieces.

Theatre:**Address:****Phone:****Artistic Director:****General Manager:****Mandate:****Facilities:****Season:****Repertoire:****Submissions:****Actor's Resumes:****No. of shows in season:****No. of actors in season:****% of Alta. actors in season:****% of Equity actors used:****Auditions:****Audition Requirements:****Special Programs:****Affiliations:****Quest Theatre**

814 - 16 Ave. S.W.

Calgary, Alberta

T2R 0S9

(403) 245-8703

Mr. Duval Lang

Larry Smith

To produce children's theatre and
tour schools.

Fall/Winter

Canadian/International Children's
Theatre.

Valerie Lubig – Tour Co-ordinator

4

17

100

100

Generals held end of May; call-
backs in August.Two pieces any style, plus inter-
view, additional special skills
desirable.

Theatre:

Address:

Phone:

Artistic Director(s):

General Manager:

Mandate:

Facilities:

Season:

Occasional touring:

Repertoire:

Submissions:

Actor's Resumes:

No. of shows in season:

No. of actors in season:

% of Alta. actors in season:

% of Equity actors used:

Auditions:

Audition Requirements:

Special Programs:

Affiliations:

Small Change Theatre

10022 - 103 St.

Edmonton, Alberta

T5J 0X2

(403) 421-8879

Robert Astle, Jan Miller, Jan Henderson.

Cathy Grant

Small Change specializes in the development of original clown and masks pieces.

No permanent performance space.

Year-round, project to project basis.

National/International.

Canadian /New.

Cathy Grant

4

4

100

100

Invitational

Experience in movement, clowning, and mask work.

Clown Workshops

Equity

Theatre:	Stage Polaris
Address:	8525 - 101 St. Edmonton, Alberta T6E 3Z4
Phone:	(403) 432-9483
Artistic Director:	Susan Woywitka
Artistic Associate:	Les Bland
Mandate:	To entertain and inspire audiences through educating children.
Facilities:	Children's - 120; Family - 720 seats
Season:	Fall/Winter
Repertoire:	Canadian/New, International.
Submissions:	
Actor's Resumes:	Susan Woywitka or Les Bland
No. of shows in season:	8
No. of actors in season:	15
% of Alta. actors in season:	100
% of Equity actors used:	25
Auditions:	Generals held in May; call for appointments; cast for season; core company - 4.
Audition Requirements:	Two contrasting pieces - some adult, but emphasis on children's theatre pieces; interview; juggling, dance, or mime a plus.
Special Programs:	Starry Time Theatre for schools and general public - children aged 3 - 7 years.
Affiliations:	

Theatre:

Address:

Phone:

Artistic Director:

Mandate:

Facilities:

Season:

Repertoire:

Submissions:

Actors' Resumes:

No. of shows in season:

No. of actors in season:

% of Alta. actors in season:

% of Equity actors used:

Auditions:

Audition Requirements:

Special Programs:

Affiliations:

Stage West Dinner Theatre

16615 - 109 Ave.

Edmonton, Alberta

T5P 4K8

(403) 484-0841; Calgary: 243-7077

Ron Ulrich

To produce light entertainment for
Dinner Theatre audiences.

Edmonton - 460 seats; Calgary -
450 seats

Year Round

Broadway and West End comedies/
musicals.

Ron Ulrich

7/theatre

40-50/theatre

60

95

Call for appointments; cast on a per
show basis.

Two contrasting pieces plus a short
cold reading; musicals - a short
song (accompanist provided).

Equity

Theatre:**Address:****Phone:****Artistic Director:****General Manager:****Mandate:****Facilities:****Season:****Repertoire:****Submissions:****Actors' Resumes:****No. of shows in season:****No. of actors in season:****% of Alta. actors in season:****% of Equity actors used:****Auditions:****Audition Requirements:****Special Programs:****Affiliations:****Theatre Calgary**

290 - 9th Ave. S.E.

Calgary, Alberta

T2G 5C4

(403) 294-7440

Martin Kinch

Gillian Dalton

A non - profit regional theatre company which produces live theatre for children and adults.

Max Bell Theatre - 767 seats

Fall/Winter

Canadian, Canadian/New, International, T.Y.O., Classical.

Martin Kinch

7

60-75

65

98

Generals: Call for appointment.

Most shows directed by guest directors.

Two contrasting contemporary pieces, a song for musicals.

Professional workshops/classes, playwright-in-residence, children's programming.

PACT, Equity, Unions des Artistes

Theatre:

Address:

Phone:

Artistic Director:

Mandate:

Facilities:

Season:

Repertoire:

Submissions:

Actor's Resumes:

No. of shows in season:

No. of actors in season:

% of Alta. actors in season:

% of Equity actors used:

Auditions:

Audition Requirements:

Special Programs:

Affiliations:

le Theatre du Coyote

9137 - 84 Avenue

Edmonton, Alberta

T6C 1E5

(403) 465-2317

Manon Beaudoin

Touring company who produce participational drama for children, including clowning.

No fixed venue

Year round

Original and adaptations (Theatre for Young Audiences).

Manon Beaudoin

2

3

100

none

Don't hold auditions.

Two contrasting Canadian pieces plus an unaccompanied song.

Clown Workshops

Theatre:

Address:

Phone:

Artistic Director:

Artistic Associate:

General Manager:

Mandate:

Facilities:

Season:

Repertoire:

Submissions:

Actor's Resumes:

No. of shows in season:

No. of actors in season:

% of Alta. actors in season:

% of Equity actors used:

Auditions:

Audition Requirements:

Special Programs:

Affiliations:

Theatre Network

11845 - 77 St.

Edmonton, Alberta

T5B 2G3

(403) 474-6111

Stephen Heatley

Greg Coltman

Ken McAra

The development and production of high quality theatre of specific relevance to a Western Canadian audience and to the development of Western Canadian theatre professionals.

Theatre Network - 160 seats

Rehearsal and production space available.

Fall/Winter

Canadian/New

Stephen Heatley

5

20

100

80

Generals held in May; cast for the season.

Two contrasting Canadian pieces plus an unaccompanied song.

Professional workshops/classes, playwright-in-residence, Theatre Sports.

PACT, Equity

Theatre:

Address:

Phone:

Artistic Director:

General Manager:

Mandate:

Facilities:

Season:

Repertoire:

Submissions:

Actor's Resumes:

No. of shows in season:

No. of actors in season:

% of Alta. actors in season:

% of Equity actors used:

Auditions:

Audition Requirements:

Special Programs:

Affiliations:

PLEASE NOTE:

All these theatres hold auditions for specific roles throughout their seasons. It is advisable to contact them during their season to ask whether they are hiring non-Equity actors for any of the parts. If you are Equity you are more likely to get an interview with the Artistic Director during the theatre's season than if you are non-Equity.

Workshop West Theatre

#602, 1036 - 100 St

Edmonton, Alberta

T5J 0P1

(403) 429-4251

Gerry Potter

Wendy Dawson

To develop and present new Canadian plays. The company is now placing an emphasis on the creation of an ensemble style, rooted in theatricality, live music and a poetic approach to social issues.

Kaasa Theatre - 200 seats

Fall/Winter

Canadian

Gerry Potter

4

10-15

80

66

Generals held end of April; call for appointment or drop-off resumes anytime; cast company for season.

Two pieces - 1 musical, 1 drama; any style - whatever you feel comfortable with.

Professional workshops/classes, Playwright-in-residence, Playwrighting Circle

PACT, Equity

Co-op Companies

Company: **AURORA STAGE
PRODUCTION THEATRE
WORKSHOPS**

Address: 105, 8 Ave. N.W.
Calgary, Alberta
T2M 0A5

Phone: (403) 265-1616

Artistic Director: Peter Spears

Union: non-union

Size:

Season:

Mandate:

Company: **LEAVE IT TO JANE**

Address: Box 1796
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 2P2

Phone: (403) 483-2537

Artistic Director:

General Manager: Tim Yachimec

Union: non-union

Size: 10-15 performers

Season: four shows

Mandate: To provide alternative theatre to Edmonton
citizens and to produce contemporary plays
and intimate musicals.

Company: **LIVE ARTS THEATRE ASSOCIATION**

Address: P.O. Box 574, Station M
Calgary, Alberta
T2P 2J2

Phone: (403) 266-8633

Contact: Jay Blue

General Manager: Vacant

Union: non-union

Size: 80 members, various theatres

Season: Summer only, 1-2 shows

Mandate: (a) To provide alternative theatre to Calgary
citizens. (b) To provide professional guid-
ance and education to the community. (c)
To expand the awareness in Calgary of the
Live Arts community.

- Company:** **NEBULOUS REBELS**
Address: 9523-Jasper Ave.
 Edmonton, Alberta
 T5H 3V2
Phone: (403) 425-9952
Artistic Director: David Cassel
Union: non-union
Size: 10-15 members, one theatre
Season: August to May
Mandate: To provide creative and alternative theatre for Edmontonians. To provide a rehearsal space for the surrounding community.
- Company:** **TEATRO LA QUINDICINA**
Address: G6, 9999 - 111 St.
 Edmonton, Alberta
 T5K 1K3
Phone: (403) 488-2739
Artistic Director: Stewart Lemoine
Union: non-union
Size: 8-10 members
Season: unstructured
Mandate: To produce plays for the Fringe Festival and to produce new works in various venues.
- Company:** **TIGER HILL**
Address: 405, 9999 - 111 St.
 Edmonton, Alberta
 T5K 1K3
Phone: (403) 488-8654
Contact Person: Bill Davidson
Union: non-union
Size: 7-9 members, various theatres
Season: mostly summer
Mandate: To provide outside the mainstream theatre. To produce shows which have been workshopped and researched for up to six weeks, and to present new and challenging works; for example, many of Sam Shepard's plays.

Company: TWO BOARDS AND A PASSION
Address: Ste. 3, 9720 - 106 St.
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 1B6
Phone: (403) 424-1376
Artistic Director: Michael D. James
Union: non-union
Size: varies with show
Season: 2-3 shows/year
Mandate: To provide high quality alternative fare from the Canadian and International repertoire, to develop original and innovative material, and to offer opportunities to aspiring actors, directors, and playwrights.

Company: UNION THEATRE
Address: #33, 9955 - 114 St.
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 1P7
Phone: (403) 488-2003
Artistic Director: Joel Stewart
Union: non-union
Size: 4 members, various spaces
Season: September - April
Mandate: To produce gutsy, unfamiliar works to expand the awareness in Edmonton of alternative theatre.

Professional Organizations

A.C.T.R.A., Canadian Actors' Equity Association (Equity) and the Union des Artistes (U.D.A.) are the prime professional associations an actor can join. Other professionals may join the organizations as well. Briefly, A.C.T.R.A. covers actors in film, T.V. and radio, while Equity is an association dealing with stage actors. The Union des Artistes is for francophone professional performing artists.

A.C.T.R.A. and/or Equity status is always a consideration to theatre and media companies. At some point in your career, it will become necessary to join one of these organizations. It is important therefore that you know these organizations exist, what they do for you, and how and when to join them.

(i) A.C.T.R.A.

What Is It and Who Is It For?

A.C.T.R.A., formerly the Association of Canadian Television and Radio Artists (pre-84), currently stands for the “Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists.” It represents professional actors, writers, broadcast journalists and researchers in film, television and radio. The actor membership is represented separately from the other professional memberships.

A.C.T.R.A. negotiates minimum wage agreements with the media on behalf of its membership. Currently there are 11 agreements affecting performers between A.C.T.R.A. and producers. When a production covered by one of these agreements gets underway (an A.C.T.R.A. production), the producer is obliged to hire A.C.T.R.A. people, to pay minimum rates stipulated by the agreement and to follow certain working day rules therein contained. Naturally an actor or an agent can negotiate for higher fees. However, this is usually reserved for actors who have begun to make a name for themselves.

A.C.T.R.A. members receive the minimum rate established for the category of role they are playing. The category (e.g. principal, actor, extra) is determined by the number of speaking lines you have. The number of lines varies with the agreement although an “extra” never has lines and cannot receive direction from the director.

Permits

When a production officially uses any A.C.T.R.A. members, it is an A.C.T.R.A. production. Non-A.C.T.R.A. performers may work on an A.C.T.R.A. production in certain circumstances, for example, when no available A.C.T.R.A. member can play the part. These performers need to get A.C.T.R.A. working permits for the duration of their participation, the cost of which depends on the category they are in. The permit cost can also depend on the production’s regional or national status, residuals and buy-out clauses.

The permit system allows you, the aspiring professional, to get good experience working with more experienced actors. It is also a limiting system. This permit is easily obtainable once you have been offered an A.C.T.R.A. job. It may or may not be paid for by

the producer. You can join A.C.T.R.A. when you have worked on six A.C.T.R.A. contracts with speaking lines (i.e. as an "actor" or a "principal"; extra contracts don't count toward the requisite six contracts). Under some agreements (e.g. the Independent Producers Agreement under which most films are made), permits are given on a weekly basis so it is possible to accumulate several permits while performing in one production.

A production may use all non-A.C.T.R.A. people, usually for financial reasons. No A.C.T.R.A. member may work on such a non-A.C.T.R.A. production unless there are extenuating circumstances.

In sum, a non-A.C.T.R.A. member can work on an A.C.T.R.A. production by getting a work permit but an A.C.T.R.A. member can not work on a non-A.C.T.R.A. production.

Edmonton A.C.T.R.A. Office:

Sharon Killey
#302, 10506 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 2W9
(403) 423-0669; 423-1460

Calgary A.C.T.R.A. Office:

Pat Byers
Ste. 260, 1414 - 8 St. S.W.
Calgary, Alberta
T2P 7N2
(403) 228-3123

Membership Cost (as of January/87)

Once you have six A.C.T.R.A. contracts, you can join A.C.T.R.A. for a (\$220) membership fee. Equity members can join at a 50 per cent reduction.

Annual dues: Minimum of \$75.00 for the first year. For the ensuing years: Minimum of \$75.00 plus 1.5 per cent of assessed yearly earnings for the previous year.

What Does A.C.T.R.A. Offer You?

A.C.T.R.A. negotiates minimum wage agreements with producers. There are separate agreements between A.C.T.R.A. (performers) and the following:

C.B.C. Television
C.T.V. Television
ACCESS Radio

Global T.V. (Ontario)
Independent Producers

C.B.C. Radio
ACCESS Alberta
OECA (Ontario Educational
Communication Authority)
Commercials
Audio Code

In addition to wage minimums, A.C.T.R.A. agreements stipulate daily working conditions.

A.C.T.R.A.:

- will provide you with legal "clout" in some dealings.
- offers health insurance, optional extended health care to family and a R.R.S. plan.
- sends its membership the national newsletter *ACTRA Scope*, published quarterly.
- sends out regional newsletters (in Alberta sent every two to three months).
- has a notice board at its offices in Edmonton and Calgary as well as an Equity board. These boards will tell you any available information about upcoming productions and workshops.
- publishes a catalogue of performers, "Face to Face," which is used by directors, producers and casting agents across Canada and the U.S. For a \$40 fee "Face to Face" prints your photo, a brief description of you and your work and where to contact you.

Regional A.C.T.R.A. offices also publish local talent catalogues. The Edmonton version is "Faces in Focus" and the cost of inclusion is variable. The Calgary version is *ACTRALOGUE*, a binder book. Pictures can be changed as your image and appearance change. \$15 for inclusion.

Who's In A.C.T.R.A.?

Take a look at "Face to Face" to see some A.C.T.R.A. members.
National Membership: 9,585

Regional Membership: Southern Alberta: Approx. 219 actors
Northern Alberta: Approx. 274 actors.

A.C.T.R.A. Income Statistics

Study by A.C.T.R.A. National Executive Director, Administration of A.C.T.R.A. members.

1982 Total A.C.T.R.A. Earnings: (\$55,008,088.)

- 66 per cent comes from performers
- 15.7 per cent comes from writers
- the balance is from writer and performer non-members

The national average income for actors in Canada is \$3,500.00. Performers principle sources of income in order of financial importance are:

1. C.B.C.
 2. Commercials
 3. Independent producers, CTV and Educational T.V.
- 63 per cent of the members earn less than \$5000 per year
 - 24 per cent earn between \$5000 and \$20,000 per year
 - 9 per cent earn between \$20,000 and \$50,000 per year
 - less than 4 per cent earn in excess of \$50,000 per year
 - Toronto has the largest number of members in the \$35,000 plus income bracket. (129 out of the performers guild)

(ii) Canadian Actors' Equity Association

Equity includes actors, directors, choreographers, ballet dancers and opera singers. Canadian membership is approximately 3,000. The average Equity member's salary in 1982 was approximately \$5,500. The Equity Agreement is in force with all members of PACT (Professional Association of Canadian Theatres). Under the agreement, theatres are categorized according to potential box office gross. Depending on the theatre category (A to G, with A being the largest), a certain percentage of the cast can be non-Equity. The category also affects salaries being paid to Equity actors.

A theatre may hire non-Equity people as apprentices or as "certified student" actors. An "apprentice actor" is an aspiring professional actor who is not yet a member of any professional performing arts association and is not a full-time student.

To qualify for Equity membership, an apprentice has to complete at least three productions for at least two different theatres within two years from the apprentice's first engagement. He can choose to work the full two years as an apprentice and then join Equity, as long as he has participated in at least three productions. There is a registration fee of \$100 for each production, and at the end of the two-year period the apprentice pays the remaining \$100.

A "certified student" is anyone registered in a university, college or conservatory theatre program who is not a member of a professional performing arts association. He may be hired as a "non-professional" by an Equity house.

Equity members may not work on a production where they won't be paid Equity wages. They may work for non-Equity houses on a guest artist contract, which the theatre secures, as long as they are paid at least Equity wages. Equity members may work for amateur companies for a minimum fee of \$25 per performance with no fee for rehearsal time. Wage requirements are more stringent with semi-professional companies and should be checked with Equity. Any extenuating circumstances should be described and addressed to the Western Canada Representative, Colleen Fee in Vancouver, who will in turn vote with local Equity representatives regarding the matter.

You may join Equity when you are offered a full Equity contract. However, it is not always as easy as it sounds. For example, you will not be hired if a present Equity member can fill the role. It may be more difficult to get in to audition for Equity theatres when you are non-Equity. There is no easy solution except to keep trying. On the other hand, you may not want to join Equity immediately because you can often get good experience in non-Equity parts. If you are Equity, you can't play a role for less than Equity wages; as a result you may not be cast in those roles because of your Equity status.

Alison Currie, Equity's National Business Representative, suggests you may have a better chance of getting valuable work as an unknown if you are non-Equity. You will undoubtedly want to join Equity at some point in your career if you want to do live theatre, but don't join immediately if you think the timing isn't right.

Equity offers its members many of the benefits that A.C.T.R.A. offers. Equity sets minimum acceptable rates above which you are free to negotiate with your engager. If necessary, Equity will go to arbitration on a performer's behalf. Equity also offers a pension plan and health insurance.

Auditions, meetings, and workshops are publicized in the national Equity monthly newsletter. To be sure of finding out in time, you should still contact the theatres. Equity theatres have call boards posting Equity newsletters and announcements. A.C.T.R.A. regional offices have Equity Boards as well. These boards are not used as often as they could be by members and are therefore not always effective communicators. With some real interest, these boards could be more useful to actors.

Current initiation fee into Equity is \$400. Dues are two per cent of annual income from Equity contracts with a minimum \$65. A.C.T.R.A. members may join at a discount up to \$200.

Business Representative for Western Canada:

Colleen Fee
101 Carrall St.
Vancouver, British Columbia
V6B 2H9 (604) 682-6173

Edmonton Representative: Bill Hales - 475-2816.

Calgary Representative: Brian Gromoff - 282-7501.

Equity Pay Scales Minimum Weekly Fees (In-Town) Actor		
THEATRE	CATEGORY	1987/88 (\$)
Alberta Theatre Projects:		
<i>Mainstage</i>	C	460.15
<i>PlayRites</i>	D	421.54
Catalyst	School Touring	336.88
Chinook	School Touring	336.88
Citadel:		
<i>Shoctor</i>	A	498.77
<i>McLab</i>	A	498.77
<i>Rice</i>	E	398.01
Lunchbox	G	305.76
Nexus	G	305.76
Northern Light	F	364.12
One Yellow Rabbit	G	305.76
Phoenix	F	364.12
Stage West		
<i>Edmonton</i>	D	421.54
<i>Calgary</i>	D	421.54
Theatre Calgary	C	460.15
Theatre Network	G	305.76
Workshop West	F	364.12

House Category

Equity pay scales are based on full potential weekly box-office gross, calculated by:

No. of tickets X regular selling price X no. of performances actually given in a playing week to a maximum of 8 less applicable entertainment tax.

- G - 0 to \$8,882
- F - \$8,883 to \$17,602
- E - \$17,603 to \$29,284
- D - \$29,285 to \$40,471
- C - \$40,472 to \$51,822
- B - \$51,823 to \$68,768
- A - \$68,769 and above

CANADIAN THEATRE AGREEMENT

Effective June 20, 1988, the minimum rates for Artists working under the Canadian Theatre Agreement are as follows:

		Point of Origin (in town)	Outside Point of Origin (touring)
ACTOR	A	\$ 498.77	\$ 939.77
	B	\$ 487.00	\$ 928.00
	C	\$ 460.15	\$ 901.15
	D	\$ 421.54	\$ 862.54
	E	\$ 398.01	\$ 839.01
	F	\$ 364.12	\$ 805.12
JOURNEYMAN	G	\$ 305.76	\$ 746.76
	A	\$ 371.14	\$ 812.14
	B	\$ 359.39	\$ 800.39
	C	\$ 332.53	\$ 773.53
	D	\$ 293.87	\$ 734.87
	E	\$ 293.87	\$ 734.87
EXTRA	F	\$ 288.35	\$ 729.35
	A	\$ 248.54	\$ 689.54
	B	\$ 243.53	\$ 684.53
	C	\$ 230.07	\$ 671.07
	D	\$ 211.62	\$ 652.62
	E	\$ 198.19	\$ 639.19
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER	F	\$ 194.43	\$ 635.43
	G	\$ 188.90	\$ 629.90
	A	\$ 723.80	\$1164.80
	B	\$ 705.33	\$1146.33
	C	\$ 668.38	\$1109.38
	D	\$ 611.29	\$1052.29
STAGE MANAGER	E	\$ 576.03	\$1017.03
	F	\$ 528.92	\$ 969.92
	G	\$ 441.83	\$ 882.83
	A	\$ 648.23	\$1089.23
	B	\$ 633.12	\$1074.12
	C	\$ 633.12	\$1040.54
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER	D	\$ 528.98	\$ 969.98
	E	\$ 497.09	\$ 938.09
	F	\$ 454.76	\$ 895.76
	G	\$ 364.99	\$ 805.99
	A	\$ 513.04	\$ 954.04
	B	\$ 499.53	\$ 940.53
	C	\$ 474.04	\$ 915.04
	D	\$ 421.54	\$ 862.54
	E	\$ 398.01	\$ 839.01
	F	\$ 364.12	\$ 805.12
	G	\$ 291.49	\$ 732.49

	DIRECTORS	CHOREOGRAPHERS
A	\$ 7398.72	\$ 3699.36
B	\$ 6416.44	\$ 3208.22
C	\$ 5180.70	\$ 2590.35
D	\$ 4099.56	\$ 2049.78
E	\$ 3010.17	\$ 1505.11
F	\$ 2455.67	\$ 1227.85
G	\$ 2154.96	\$ 1077.49
Special Category per Week	\$ 697.08	\$ 566.16

(iii) Union Des Artistes

The Union des Artistes is the Canadian union of French-speaking professional performing artists with approximately 2,500 members. Since most of its members live in central Canada, it is discussed only briefly.

Montreal Regional Contact:	1290 Rue St. Denis Montreal, P.Q. (514) 288-6682
Toronto Regional Contact:	College Street Toronto, Ontario (416) 967-4408

(iv) Agencies

There are several casting directors but few “talent agents” in Alberta at this time. Well known actors will often have personal managers as agents. When you are first starting your career, you will not be in a position to have such an agent. Talent agencies, however, do some of the things a personal agent would do.

Some Alberta-based actors have agents elsewhere (e.g. Toronto), who negotiate national and international contracts for them. The performers themselves usually handle the regional contracts. The agent may find them work and will handle bookings for shows and auditions that the performer might otherwise not be in a position to hear about.

The essential differences between a casting director and a talent agent are:

- a) A talent agent works on your behalf; he may find you work, but you cannot rely on him to do so. He will negotiate on your behalf on any or all contracts and make your bookings. You then pay the agent a percentage of the contract fee. At an early stage in your career it is unlikely that you or your agent will be able to negotiate for fees higher than established A.C.T.R.A. or Equity fees. Even with an agent, a performer still has to hustle up his own work.

- b) The casting director works for the producer. He locates talent for auditions. The actor is not charged a fee; the producer pays the casting director agent a set fee.

Talent Agents: Gordon Wyber
 Ste. 1305, 9916 - 113 St.
 Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2N3
 (403) 488-0452

Peter Holgersen
Darren Bagshaw
Graffiti Booking Agency Inc.
1635 Royal LePage Tower
10130 - 103 St.
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3N9
(403) 421-7635

Casting Directors: Bette Chadwick
 The Other Agency Casting Ltd.
 210, 10534 - 109 Street
 Edmonton, Alberta
 (403) 428-8515

Jaci Majer
87 - Sanderling Hill, N.W.
Calgary, Alberta T3K 3B7
(403) 295-0855
(403) 235-9209

Diane Rogers
6323 - 4th St., N.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2K 1B7
(403) 295-1850

You should be listed with a casting director as that may be the only way to find out about a production and auditions. Furthermore, if your face is familiar he will be more likely to think of you when a request is made.

You may wish to contact some of the following agencies for modelling or to check out other types of jobs that occasionally come to their attention.

John Casablanca's
Ste. 800 - 10665 Jasper Ave.
Edmonton, Alberta
(403) 429-1491

New Dawn Modelling and Talent Agency
515 - 10th Ave. S.W.
Calgary, Alberta
(403) 269-3370 (New Dawn is a talent agency as well as a
modelling and actor's casting agency)

(v) Festivals

The Banff Centre hosts an annual week-long International Television Festival. It caters to producers, directors and other production people. There are, however, seminars and screenings of interest to anyone associated with television and many interesting people in the business to talk to. The cost to attend as a member is quite high. You can attend the public screenings for free or volunteer to work for admission.

Other film and television festivals of general interest are held around the province. All of these festivals are places to find out what is happening in the media and to meet people who work in it.

You can hear about these festivals as well as workshops from A.M.P.I.A. or from local film-makers co-operatives.

(vi) Film Contacts

A.M.P.I.A.
Alberta Motion Picture Industries Association
Suite 345, 10113 - 104 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
(403) 423-0709

A.M.P.I.A. knows of most productions in town or coming to town and is a good source of information. It has a permanent office and is worth a visit when you are becoming familiar with the film business.

F.A.V.A. The Society for Film and Video Artists of Alberta
9722 - 102 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 0X4
(403) 429-1671

Calgary Society of Independent Filmmakers
Box 30089, Station B
Calgary, Alberta T2M 4N7
(403) 277-1741

Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism
Film and Literary Arts
12th Floor, C.N. Tower
10004 - 104 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 0K5
(403) 427-2554

(vii) Awards

A.M.P.I.A. Awards

A.M.P.I.A. gives annual awards to exceptional film-makers, performers, directors and other production people. Best Alberta actor and actress in an Alberta-made film receive awards. To be eligible, your film must be submitted for consideration.

The A.M.P.I.A. Awards are held annually, usually in March/April.

A.M.P.I.A. meetings are a potential contact place. A.M.P.I.A. caters primarily to producers, directors, etc., so few performers are members. However, you can attend meetings without being a member to see what they have to offer.

Sterling Awards

The Performing Arts Publicists' Association (P.A.P.A.) inaugurated the first annual Elizabeth Sterling Haynes Awards on June 27, 1988 at the Stage West Dinner Theatre in Edmonton.

The Sterlings are awarded annually to exceptional Edmonton theatre practitioners, performers, directors, and other production people. A panel of jurors select the nominees and ballots are cast by the Edmonton theatre community to determine the recipients of the Sterling Award in each category.

(viii) Directories

Reel West Film and Video Digest is a directory for film, video and A.V. production in western Canada. Published yearly, it is a useful guide for contacts to find out what's happening in film and video.

It lists associations, production personnel and companies, etc. It also has a short section on performers (including stunt people) and related services. You can have your name, address and a 12-word description listed in the guide for \$45.

Alberta Film and Video Digest is a guide to resources for the film and video community in Alberta, published by the Film and Literary Arts Branch of Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism. Copies are available free of charge.

Professional Schools

A committee of inquiry was formed in 1977 under the patronage of the Canada Council to research theatre training in Canada. Their report (referred to as the Black Report) affirmed that top quality professional training for actors was available at three schools in Canada: The University of Alberta, The Vancouver Playhouse Acting School and the National Theatre School in Montreal, P.Q. Following is some information regarding audition times for these schools.

University of Alberta, Drama Department:

The University of Alberta offers a B.F.A. in Drama. The course is currently a three year course but requires the student to have taken one academic year outside of the department before being admitted. Auditions are held during the last week of February, usually the school's reading week, across Canada in Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Saskatoon, Winnipeg and Toronto. Individuals wishing to audition at any of these locations should apply to the University before Christmas.

Anyone wishing to audition in Edmonton may apply to the University.

Address: Department of Drama
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta
T6G 2C9
(403) 432-2271

Vancouver Playhouse Acting School:

This intensive two-year course is booked until 1989 as auditions are only held every two years. Auditions are held across Canada in Vancouver, Victoria, Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, and Toronto in early spring. At that time approximately 15 students from across Canada will be accepted. For further information and an application contact:

Registrar, Acting School
543 West 7th Avenue
Vancouver, B.C.
V5Z 1B4
(604) 872-6622

The National Theatre School:

This three-year course can be pursued in either English or French. Applications must be sent to the school by February 1 of any year. There is a \$35 non-refundable application fee. Actors will be given an audition sometime between mid-March and mid-April; a decision will be reached in May.

An audition panel travels to Vancouver, Victoria, Calgary or Edmonton (Calgary in 1984, Edmonton in 1986 and it continues to alternate), Regina, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and points east. Call backs are made to selected actors and are held in Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal.

For further information contact:

The Registrar
The National Theatre School
5030 Rue St. Denis
Montreal, Quebec
H2J 2L8
(514) 842-7954

Alternative Programs in Theatre Training

Grande Prairie Regional College

10726 - 106 Avenue
Grande Prairie, Alberta T8V 4C4
(403) 539-2916

Kathy Harper, Prod. Co-ordinator,
Dept. of Visual and Performing Arts.

Type of Program: Community College
Areas of Study: Acting, Stagecraft, Directing.

Grant MacEwan Community College

10045 - 156 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5P 2P7
(403) 483-2359 / 4411

Timothy Ryan, Program Head

Type of Program: Community College
Areas of Study: Arts Administration, Musical Theatre, Technical.

Medicine Hat College

299 College Drive
Medicine Hat, Alberta T1A 3Y6
(403) 529-3880

Bob Mumford, Drama Dept. Head

Type of Program: Community College
Areas of Study: Acting, Stagecraft, Theatre History

Mount Royal College

4825 Richard Road S.W.
Calgary, Alberta T3E 6K6
(403) 240-6821

Lynn duFort, Chairperson

Type of Program: Community College
Areas of Study: Acting, Stagecraft, Directing, Design.

Red Deer College
Box 5005
Red Deer, Alberta T4N 5H5
(403) 342-3511

Richard O'Brien, Chairperson

Type of Program: Community College
Areas of Study: Acting, Technical.

University of Calgary
Department of Drama
2500 University Drive N.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4
(403) 220-5421

James Dugan, Departmental Chairperson

Type of Program: Undergraduate/Graduate University
Areas of Study: Acting, Playwriting, Design, Directing, Theatre
Criticism and History, Teacher Training, Technical.

University of Lethbridge
Department of Dramatic Arts
4401 University Drive
Lethbridge, Alberta T1K 3M4
(403) 329-2675

Richard Epp, Chairman

Type of Program: Undergraduate University
Areas of Study: Acting, Playwriting, Arts Administration, Design,
Directing, Theatre Criticism and History, Teacher Training, Techni-
cal.

Banff School of Fine Arts

Box 1020

Banff, Alberta T0L 0C0

(403) 762-6193

Professional Actor's Workshop

June - August

Head, Patricia Hamilton: This program is for Canadian actors with a minimum of five years professional experience. Working with a master director, this small group of a dozen actors will probe a particular dramatic style through the rehearsal and studio presentation of a work. It is a program of risk-taking and exploration.

Participants for this program will receive an award to cover the full cost of fees, room and board, and will receive Equity minimum salaries.

Application Deadline: Call school directly.

Audition Mandatory.

Drama Apprenticeship Program

June - August

Head, Patricia Hamilton: Working alongside the Professional, Actor's Workshop, this program is geared to the young professional just beginning their career, or the actor just finishing basic training. A program of instruction with national and international teachers will provide in depth training in all aspects of the acting process. Participants for this program will receive an award to cover the full cost of fee and room and board.

Application Deadline: Call school directly.

Audition Mandatory.

Drama Auditions

Audition locations and dates for Drama will be determined after the preliminary selection of candidates is completed. Applicants selected to audition will be notified of location, date, time and requirements.

Addresses and information on course content of other Canadian schools offering drama classes are listed in the Directory of Canadian Theatre Schools, Downsview, Ontario 1982-83, available at the Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism Library.

Financial Assistance

Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism Arts Study Grants are designed to assist individuals with formal study and personal development in the field of theatre. Individual grants of up to \$2,000 are awarded twice annually. Deadlines for applications are currently February 15 and August 1. To receive such awards, actors are required to present an audition piece. They are judged on their talent, skills and proposed programs by a panel of three qualified professionals in the field of theatre.

Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism Theatre Consultant, Gordon Gordey, feels that the actors who have been most successful during these auditions have been those who have had "that elusive quality called presence, have had a sense of humor and whose audition pieces allowed for transitions of mood and vocal quality. In addition, the audition committees place a great deal of emphasis on the interview, where the actor is assessed on his potential contribution to theatre as a whole and on his potential for being a positive influence in the creative rehearsal process. Important to the choice of audition pieces is the avoidance of the popular (Top 10) audition pieces usually found in 'Favourite Audition Pieces of 198_.'"

For further information on the study grant auditions, contact:

Gordon Gordey
Theatre Consultant
Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism -
Performing Arts Branch
11th Floor, C.N. Tower
10004 - 104 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 0K5 (403) 427-2563

PERIODICALS LIST

Available at the Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism Library:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Canadian Theatre Review
5201 Dufferin Street
Downsview, Ontario
M3H 9Z9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- published quarterly- subscription \$25/ year,
\$20 - students- features articles and inter-
views on Canadian and
International theatre events
normally built on a single
theme- a new Canadian playscript in
each issue |
| Theatre Ontario Newsletter
8 York Street, 7th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M5J 1R2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- published bi-monthly- subscription - magazine mailed
to all members- descriptions of theatre events,
personalities, productions,
awards throughout Ontario |
| Plays and Players
Brevet Publishing Ltd.
445 Brighton Road
South Croydon, Surrey
England CR2 6EU | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- published monthly- subscription \$45 per year- articles, interviews, review of
London productions and in the
regions, Europe and U.S |
| Amateur Stage
Stacey Publications
1 Hawthordene Road
Hayes, Bromley, Kent
England BR2 7DZ | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- published monthly- subscription \$25 per year- devoted to covering amateur
theatre events throughout
Great Britain |
| The Drama Review
The MIT Press
28 Carleton Street
Cambridge, Mass. 02142 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- published quarterly- subscription \$20 (US) per year- covers International and
American theatre events. Each
issue built around a single
theme |

American Theatre
355 Lexington Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10017
(Theatre Communications)

- published monthly
- subscription \$39 per year
- magazine of US non-profit professional theatres
- personalities, events, monthly listing of all productions by member theatres

Theatre Crafts
P.O. Box 630
Holmes, Pennsylvania
19043

- published nine times/year
- subscription \$24 (US)/year
- articles pertaining to theatre design, technology and new equipment

Theatre Design & Technology -
330 West - 42nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10036

- published quarterly
- subscription \$32/year
- devoted to theatre architecture, design, technology and equipment

Dramatics
International Thespian Society
3368 Central Parkway
Cincinnati, Ohio 45225

- published monthly
- subscription \$15/year
- articles, interviews on contemporary amateur US theatre and drama

After Dark
Danad Publishing Co.
1180 Avenue of the Americas
New York, N.Y. 10036

- a magazine of entertainment: theatre, film, television, music
- published monthly
- subscription \$14/year (US)

Arts Management Reader
Rodius Group Inc.
408 West 57th Street
New York, N.Y. 10019

- published five times/year
- subscription \$10/year (US)

Drama
British Theatre Association
9 Fitzroy Square
London W.1. England

- published quarterly

Children's Theatre Review - published quarterly
 American Theatre Association - subscription \$8(US)/year
 Children Theatre Association
 1000 Vermont Avenue NW
 Washington, D.C. 20005

Educational Theatre News - published 6 times/year
 S. California Educational - subscription \$2
 Theatre Association
 9811 Pounds Avenue
 Whittier, California 90603

Performing Arts in Canada - published quarterly
 52 Avenue Road, 2nd Floor - subscription \$3/year
 Toronto, Ontario
 M5R 2G3

Performing Arts Journal - published 3 times/year
 325 Spring Street, Room 318 - subscription \$14/year (US)
 New York, N.Y. 10013

Playboard - professional stage magazine
 Arch-Way Publishers Ltd. - published monthly
 7560 Lawrence Drive - subscription \$12/year
 Burnaby, B.C. - Theatre events in B.C.
 V5A 1T6

Theatre - published 3 times/year
 Yale Univ. School of Drama - subscription \$15/year (US)
 Box 2046, Yale Station
 New Haven, Connecticut
 U.S.A. 06520

Variety - news from the entertainment
 Variety Inc. world, films, theatre, t.v.
 154 West - 46th St. - focus on short reviews and
 New York, N.Y. financial aspects of show
 U.S.A. 10036 business
 - published weekly
 - subscription \$45/year

Cinema Canada

P.O. Box 398, Outremont Stn.
Montreal, P.Q. H2V 4N3

- film trade paper
- published monthly
- subscription \$19/year
- for individuals \$25/year

CanPlay

8 York St., 6th Fl.
Toronto, Ontario
M5J 1R2

- PUC's bi-monthly newsletter
- inside info about productions, upcoming seasons, writers, directors.
- subscription \$15/year

Theatrum

P.O. Box 688
Station C
Toronto, Ontario
M6J 3S1

- published 5 times/year
- criticism, reviews, articles.
- subscription \$5 for 3 issues (1987)

THE ACTOR'S IS A TAXING PROFESSION

by David Glyn-Jones
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Who Are You?

The actor is a self-employed person running his own business of being an actor. As such, Taxman says he must record his business income and the expense to which he is put to earn that income. He also says the expense must be reasonable in relation to the earnings.

A Word of Advice

Let your bank do the work.

- i) Deposit your earnings intact to your bank account and note their source.
- ii) Pay everything you can by cheque.

Dear Diary

Keep one. Note in it your appointments and your schedule each day. When you've laid out a cash expense, note it too. That diary will refresh your memory up to four years hence should Taxman check you out, and is acceptable as prima facie evidence of the outlays noted therein. While you're at it, KEEP YOUR BILL. You know you're honesty personified, but the Taxman likes proof. You must be able to support (i.e. prove) each expense claimed.

What Can You Deduct?

Accounting: Yes

Bank Service Charges: Yes, if you're running a business account.

Car: Tricky. The actor's place of business is the theatre so there's

no expense between home and theatre, unless there's a special reason for the use of the car - for example, where a costume must be worn to the theatre, or one engagement follows another so closely that a car is the only means by which the engagement can be fulfilled. So, car expense is usually moderate. You are supposed to keep a log and calculate thus:

$$\frac{\text{Business Miles} \times \text{Total operating expenses of the car}}{\text{Total Miles}}$$

Total Operating expenses include licences, insurance, ordinary repairs, gasoline, oil and grease, servicing charges, and short or long term rentals.

The maximum deduction for capital cost allowance of a car is 30 per cent of the undepreciated balance at the end of the year. In the year of acquisition only, one half of the normal amount is allowed.

Coaching: The tax conference of December/84 came up with two great things for you - ALL music, acting or general lessons are now deductible even if unrelated to a particular role. GRANTS awarded to you are now treated as business income and you can deduct expenses from them, but only to the point where they will reduce revenue to nil.

Commissions: Agents, etc. Every penny.

Dry Cleaning: To cover what's used in rehearsal or performance.

Hair Styling: When specifically required. General styling, yes, but remember - reasonable!

Hotels: Save your receipts when out of town. In town? Sounds more like a personal pecadillo, even to your friends.

Insurance: No, unless peculiarly specific, eg. on equipment, etc.

Maintenance and repairs: To wardrobe, wigs, equipment (typewriter), etc.

Office/Postage/Stationery: Include your mailing envelopes, photo protectors, etc. You CANNOT charge for an office in your OWN HOME unless a specific area is set aside for it (and a corner of the dining room table, or the occasional use of the living room as the set for your current show does not qualify).

Professional Dues: Equity, ACTRA, etc. But you can't deduct the initiation fee.

Publicity/promotion: Your 8 x 10's, Face to Face, the cost of video-taping your own promotional material. Put your entertainment in here. THIS IS THE GUIDING RULE. You entertain to create and maintain good relations with the colleagues with whom you are working including Producer X and Director Y. Keep receipts and note on them who, when, where and why.

Rent: Only if out of town and in place of hotels.

Supplies: Make-up, make-up towels, kleenex, etc.

Taxis: Yes - as for car expense. Only if you're in a special costume worn from home, etc.

Telephone: Charge off 100 per cent of bills including business long distance calls. Then reduce it by a personal share of the basic cost of renting the instrument.

Travel: When it's your responsibility to get out of town. (Don't be sneaky and forget it's been refunded to you).

Wardrobe: Unless your act is to play Centennial Sam, your wardrobe is also used for ordinary wear. So add up all purchases necessary for shows and charge yourself back with the proportion of wear you have personally. If your double-knit mink coat or suit runs over \$100 or more for business purposes, you should add it to your Capital Wardrobe outlay.

Capital Cost Allowance: Add to your Capital items those costing, say \$100 or more (typewriter, wardrobe, wigs, cars, etc.) These reduce at 20 per cent of the undepreciated balance, cars at 30 per cent.

Points to Bear in Mind

1. Remember, you pay 100 per cent of CPP. That's 50 per cent as employer and 50 per cent as employee.
2. If you have CPP and/or UIC deducted, you are not self-employed and cannot claim any expenses against income so earned.
3. If you can afford it, additional payments to your Registered Retirement Savings Plan are a great tax saving. The 1986 maximums are 20 per cent of your earned income or \$7500, whichever is less.
4. You are supposed to send the Taxman 1/4 of your estimated taxes for the year at March 31, June 30, September 30 and December 31, cleaning up the balance with your tax return.
5. The five-year averaging is now cancelled. It is replaced by a "forward averaging" provision. You need \$60,000 or more income even to consider it. If you have - you lucky actor you - go directly to 6.
6. When you've got all this locked up in your actor's retentive memory - go to a qualified accountant and have him do it. It's worth it. One thing though! Spend a little time beforehand and organize your records and receipts. He doesn't want to shuffle them around and you don't want to pay him to do it.

This information is intended as a guideline only. For up-to-date information on taxation regulations for self-employed performing artists you may want to contact A.C.T.R.A., C.A.E.A., or Revenue Canada.

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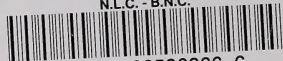
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